Dauids Euidence,

OR,

The assurance of Gods loue:

Declared in seauen Sermons vpon the three last verses of the 41. Psalme.

By William Burton preacher at Reading.

Cantic. 1. 1. Let him kisse me, with the kisses of his mouth, for thy loue is better then wine.

1. Cor. 2. 2. For I e seeme not to know any thing among you, saue Iesus Christ and him crucified.

Seene and allowed.

W. M. B

Printed at London for Iohn Hardie, dwelling in Paules church-yard at the signe of the Tygers head.

1596

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE, AND HIS SINGVLAR GOOD Lord, the Lord Wentworth, and to the right *honorable and vertuous Lady his wife.* W.B. *wisheth the certaine assurance of Gods fauour in this life, and the ful fruition of the same in the world to come.*

AT length I haue presumed, (which I haue long purposed) to offer vnto your Honors, some poore token of that duety which bindeth me vnto your Hh. while life lasteth. Hoping that you will accept of it as fruite in season, although it be of two yeares growth and more. After I had yeelded vnto the publishing of these fewe Sermons, I thought with my self of whom I might make choise, to become a patrone, and a refuge vnto so poore, and simple meditations: that vnder the shadow of their fauourable acceptance

they might finde some rest, and reliefe, and when I thought of your Hh. I set downe my rest, boldly presuming, yea fully assuring my self that this small testimony of dutie (whatsoeuer it be) should be no lesse acceptable the my self haue been alwaies welcome vnto you, and to your whole household. And indeed my good Lord, they doe belong vnto your Hh. in many respects.

First, in regard of those manifold fauours and honourable kindnesses, which I haue alwaies (although vndeserued) found at your Lordships handes. Secondly, when I was as a drie roote remooued, and vnlikely to finde a place to grow in, your Lordship did receiue me, and (vnder God) was a speciall meanes to preserue me from such stormes and tempestes as did then threaten to annoy me. Further, by your Lordships good meanes a way was made, and a place was prouided, that I might exercise my talent to the gain of the Church. At my departure, your Lordship also furnished me with bookes out of your Librarie, and with other helpes, more then euer I looked for, or deserued: & in all these, your onely care and desire was of my good, and the good of Gods Church. Reason therefore requireth, that your Lordship should once in 2. yeares space take a taste, at the least, of some of that fruite, which (through the blessing of of God) the soile of your Lordships fauour & kindnesse.

kindneſſe, hath yeelded. But principally in regard of the matter it ſelfe, this treatiſe (if it be worthy of ſuch a name) belongeth to both your Hh, and to your whole houſhold, whoſe chiefe delight with your Hh. was alwaies (during my abode in your Lordſhips houſe) in the holy exerciſes of religion and pietie. And I doubt not but that your Hh. godly zeale, & chriſtian care that way is ſtill as great as euer, if not much greater then euer it was.

As for the matter ſubiect of this treatiſe (I meane the aſſurance of Gods fauour, and ſuch things as belong vnto the ſame) I am perſwaded, it is ſo heauenly, and comfortable in it ſelfe, that nothing can be vnto your Hh. more deare and precious, then to be conuerſant in the ſame: for I know you are alreadie perſwaded thereof, and ſufficiently confirmed therein: yet as the diſciples ſaid (when the Lord Ieſus ſhewed what a happie thing it is to eate bread in the kingdome of heauen) *Lord giue vs euermore of that bread* (the very hearing therof did ſo pleaſe them.) Euen ſo your Hh. hauing heard, and felt in your ſoules, howe bleſſed a thing it is to be aſſured of Gods fauor to eternall life, you will ſay, let vs ſtill heare of that matter. For all things ſauing this, doe in time conſume and become tedious: but this is of that nature, that the more is ſpent of it, the more it increaſeth, like the widowes oile, and the longer it is fed vpon, the ſweeter it is

vnto the ſoules of the faithfull, like the water which Chriſt turned into wine, that whoſoeuer drinketh thereof, may ſay as his mother ſaid, (when all ſeemed to be gone) *Lord thou haſt kept the better vntill now*, and the beſt is yet to come. If it ſhall pleaſe your Hh. to vouchſafe the peruſing hereof, and to meaſure the commendation therof vnto the glory of god, but by the liking and feeling of your owne heartes I haue what I deſire, and my paines are more then ſufficiently recompenced. Thus humbly crauing pardon for my boldneſſe, I commend both your Hh. and it, to the gracious bleſsing of the moſt high.

Your honours, in all humble duetie, to be commanded in the Lord.

W. Burton.

TO HIS BELOVED AND Christian auditours in the Citie of Bristol, grace mercy, and peace.

FOr your sakes in generall (beloued in the Lord Iesus) I haue aduentured to lay my selfe open in these my poore endeuours, to the view and censure of all the world. For your comfort, I first spake them, and for your profite I haue now penned them, that if any thing were at the first mistaken, and not wel vnderstood, or since that hath been forgotten, and as yet is vnpractised you might now learne it better, remember it longer, and practise it euer, to your endlesse comfort. But that which hath chiefly preuailed with me for the publishing hereof, is the earnest desire of many, and special entreatie of some poore christians, afflicted in conscience, which came vnto me since, with their imperfect notes of their owne gathering, which I tooke as certaine pledges of some comfort already receiued, & arguments of a holy desire to be further profited therby. Whose christiam desire, & godly hūger I take in this case as a sufficient calling hereunto, neither doe I yet see how I could wel haue made thē a denial, without some preiudice to their soules, some aduantage to the enemy, and some checke vnto mine owne conscience. For the matter it self I confesse, it is of that maiesty, & excellēcy, that it requireth both large and deep discourses, wherein many, both learned

& godly haue not bin wanting. My care hath bin to be ſound and plaine, for the benefite eſpecially of the ſimpler ſort. And as the womã in the goſpel thought her ſelfe happie if ſhe might but touch the hem of Chriſtes garment, ſo when I began to meditate vpon the aſſurance of Gods loue, it ſeemed to be ſo excellent a point, & ſo ful of comfort, that I thought my ſelf a happy man if I might but touch the points, & borders therof, ſeeing I coulde not attain to the full handling therof. If anie ignorant may be inſtructed in the trueth, if anie hereby may in time bee conuerted to the loue of the trueth, if anie that is conuerted, may by this meanes be confirmed in the truth, giue god the glorie, & I hold my trauaile ſufficiently recompenſed, neither ſhall it repent mee to haue paſſed through good report and badde reporte, through honour and diſhonour, and the cenſures of all, ſo that any profite may redound to your ſoules, & all the glorie may returne vnto God. That God which in his rich mercy hath firſt planted, & now watered it, continue his good bleſsing vpõ it, that it may become fruitfull in vs, and wee in it may grow vp as trees planted by the riuers of Gods loue and fauor, to bring forth fruit in due ſeaſon, then ſhal not our leaues wither, & that which we take in hand ſhal proſper, vnto the ful fruitiõ & happie enioying of that his loue, whereof he hath now giuen vs an aſſurance in his ſon Ieſus Chriſt. Reade wel, and reape much, poſſeſſe your ſoules with patience, & aſsiſt me with your praiers.

W. B.

THE FIRST SERMON OF THE ASSVRANCE OF GODS LOVE.

Nouember. 19.

Psal. 41.11,12,13. *By this I know that thou fauoureſt mee, becauſe mine enemy doth not triumph againſt me.* 12. *And as for me thou vpholdeſt me in mine integritie, and doſt ſet mee before thy face for euer.* 13. *Bleſſed be the Lorde God of Iſrael, without end. So be it. euen ſo be it.*

Oncerning the author of this Psalm, it was the Prophet *Dauid*, who was both moued therunto, and giuded therein by the holy ghoſt: and therfore we neede not doubt to receiue the doctrine thereof, because he which is the ſpirit of truth neuer led any but to the truth.

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The time when he made it, was (as it seemeth in the 9. verse) when *Absalom* (aspiring to the kingdome) like a monster in nature, sought (by the wicked counsell of that faith-
2. Sam. 16. 21. lesse counseller and fained friend *Achitophel*) to pull from his owne father the crowne vpon his head, to lay his honour in the dust, and his life in the graue. No small temtation, either to blaspheme, or to dispaire: & yet he did neither of both: because God kept him from both; but then, euen in that hard time of winter (as they may call it) bethought with himselfe how he might make his affliction an occasion of further profit to himselfe and the whole Church of God, whereby it appeareth that no affliction is able to quaile the spirit of God in the godly, but as oyle maketh the fire to flame out, which before did but onely
2. Cor. 4. 16. burne, so with the godly, when the outward man doth perish, the inward man is renued, and their afflictions doe make the spirit to flame out of thē to the good of others, which before did but burne within them to their owne comfort.

Now for the matter of the Psalme. In generall he sheweth. 1. How great his affliction was. 2. Howe greatly he profited by it. But more particularly he recordeth. 1. The blessed estate of such as did wisely consider of his distressed estate, vers. 1, 2, 3. 2. He sheweth

the

the cauſe of his affliction to be his ſinne, ver. 4 3. He ſetteth downe the greatneſſe of his affliction, and the danger that he ſtoode in, for his enemies looked euery day for his death and deſtruction.

And of thoſe his enemies he nameth three ſorts. The firſt ſort were flatterers, of whom he complaineth, and ſaith that they woulde come to ſee him, but *they woulde ſpeake lyes horde vp wickednesse in their heart, as in a veſſell, and when they could get fit oportunitie they would emptie it vpon him. verſe. 6.* The ſecond ſort were malitious whiſperers, which did nothing but priuilie contriue his ouerthrow, of whom he complaineth in the 7. and 8. verſes thus. *All that hate mee whiſper together againſt mee, euen againſt mee do they imagine my hurt. A miſchiefe is lighted vpon him, and he that is downe ſhall no more ariſe.* The third ſort were a more trecherous brood, who while they pretended kindneſſe intended his ſubuerſion, like *Iudas*, who couered his treaſon with a kiſſe. Of theſe traiterous companions he complaineth in the ninth verſe after this manner. *Yea my familiar friend whom I truſted, which did eate of my bread, hath lifted vp the heele againſt me.*

And therefore being thus beſet with open enemies on one ſide, with flattering clawbacks on the other ſide, with whiſperers behind

kinde, and traitors before, his daunger must needes be great, and his case (in mans sight) verie desperate. 4. He sheweth what meanes
4. hee vsed to preuent them all, and that was prayer to God, as appeareth in the 10. verse. *Therefore (O Lorde,) raise mee vp, so shall I reward them.*

But lest Sathan might perswade him to doubt of Gods fauour towards him in his affliction, as he would haue done with *Iob* in his temptation, and so make him either cold in prayer, or distrustfull in prayer, that so hee might also haue lost the fruite of his prayer,
5. therfore in the fift place, he proueth by two arguments that all this notwithstanding, god doth still fauour him, The 1. is drawen from his enemies person in the 11. verse. The 2. is taken from the consideration of his own per-
6. son in the 12. verse. Last of all, because God had giuen him such tokens of his loue, therefore hee concludeth his Psalme with thanksgiuing vnto God in this sort, *Blessed be the lord God of Israel, world without end, &c.*

This Psalme was left vnto the Church of God, and teacheth vs; first, to take heed how we do rashly condemn those that be in trouble and affliction, and are beset with diuerse sorts of enemies, but wisely to consider, and charitably to iudge of their cause, if we looke for the Lordes helpe when we are in trouble

our ſelues, and not to meaſure Gods fauour by outward proſperitie, nor his anger by outward aduerſitie, as blinde worldlings commonly vſe to do. 2. that the vſe of affliction is to worke in vs repentance for our ſinnes, and make vs flie to Gods mercie for ſuccour, as *Dauid* did. 3. That Gods children while they liue, ſhall liue in daunger of open ennemies, of malitions whiſperers, and falſe brethren, though they bee as godly as *Dauid* was. 4. That if we then goe to God by prayer, wee ſhall preuent all our enemies, if they were as manie as *Dauids* were. 5. That in our prayers we muſt be aſſured of Gods loue in Chriſt to vs ward, leſt otherwiſe we looſe the fruit of our prayer. 6. That when God hath heard vs we muſt with hartie conſent pray to him for it as *Dauid* did. So much of the pſalme in generall; now to the text.

By this I know, &c. In this text wee ſee two things. 1. How *Dauid* aſſureth himſelfe of Gods loue towards him. 2. How thankefull he is to God for aſſuring him of his loue. The. 1. he doth by two arguments; One taken from his enemies, they were preuented of their expectation, therfore thou loueſt mee. The other is take from his own eſtate, which was no whit hurt, or impaired, but bettered by them. In his thankſgiuing wee may note two things. 1. To whom he giueth thankes,

namely

namely, to the Lord God of Israel. 2. In what manner he giueth thanks: with doubling of his speech, in token of his heartie and vnfained consent to that which he spake, & as one afraide that it was not well inough, when it was at the best, he saith. *So be it, euen so be it.* So much for the method, now to the matter.

By this I know that thou fauourest me, &c.

First, heere the Prophet speaketh of his knowledge, and telleth vs, that though hee knew not all things, yet hee knew that God loued him, and so long as hee knoweth that, he passeth not greatly for other matters, how the world goeth with him, &c. And to say the truth he neede not, for he that is sure of that, is sure of all. God loueth all his creatures as a good God, and hateth nothing that hee made, but he loueth his elect children with a more speciall loue then the rest, as a father in Christ Iesus, and he that is sure that god doth so fauour him, is sure I say of all. For to him who god loueth, he wil denie no good thing, no, not his owne sonne, and if hee gaue vs his sonne, because hee loued vs, how shall he not with him giue vs all things else?

1 Iohn. 3. 1. Rom. 8. 32.

When the childe is perswaded that his father loueth him, he is bold to aske this & that of his father, so may wee be bold to aske anie

thing

thing of god our heauenly father that is good for vs, when wee be ſure that hee loueth vs. As *Mary* and *Martha* put Chriſt in minde but of two things; the firſt was, that Chriſt loued their brother *Lazarus*, the ſecond was, that *Lazarus* was ſicke, *He whom thou loueſt is ſicke*, it was no neede to tell him what hee ſhould do, for they knew he would doe what might bee done for him, becauſe hee loued him. So wee may ſay to the Lord, when wee are ſure that hee loueth vs, Lord he whō thou loueſt wanteth this or that for his body or his ſoule, wee neede not then appoint him what to doe, or when, or how, for looke what hee ſeeth, moſt conuenient for vs, and for his own glorie, he will ſurely doit. Therfore whatſoeuer *Dauid* knoweth, he wil be ſure to know this: and whatſoeuer he is ignorant of, yet of this he will not be ignorant: to teach vs, that whatſoeuer we ſeeke to make ſure, this muſt firſt be made ſure, or elſe nothing is ſure. *Peter* bids vs make our election ſure. *Iob* when hee ſaith, I *am ſure that my redeemer liueth*, teacheth vs to make our redemption ſure. And here *Dauid* teacheth vs to make Gods fauour ſure: now if we make that ſure, then our election is ſure, our redemption is ſure, our vocation is ſure, and our ſaluation is ſure.

The ſuter deſireth but the fauour of his beloued, what doth the childe deſire of his father

ther but fauour? what doth the subiect seeke for of his prince, but fauour? as *Hester* desired nothing but that the king woulde holde out his golden Serpent to her in token of fauour: what doth the prisoner craue but fauour? And all these thinke themselues in good estate if they may knowe that they bee in fauour. And shall not wee thinke our selues sure, when we are sure that God doth fauour vs, whose loue is aboue the loue of Princes, aboue the loue of fathers and mothers, yea aboue all loues? Yea no doubt of it, for if wee make that sure, then our Prince is sure, our kingdome is sure, our Cities are sure, our bodies are sure, our soules are sure, and all is sure, for who dare hurt, or who can touch him whom God fauoreth? they touch the very apple of his eie. Shall wee labour and tranaile to be sure of loue, which is mutable, and not of that loue which is vnchaungeable? mans loue is mingled with hatred, and is commonly more like hatred then loue, but Gods loue is perfect without anie mixture: whom men fauour, they fauour for a while, but whom God loueth he loueth to the end, euen for euer. Shal we then seeke for the scraps, & let the feast go? shall we go to the cricks, whē we may gee to the sea? nay to filthie puddles, when pure fountaines are by? so wee may soone prooue as wise as *Esau*, that changed

Rom. 11. 29.

his

his birth-right for naught, nay so we proue as foolish as *Iudas*, that valued the goodwill of the Iewes aboue the loue of Christ, but he gat nothing by it, by that time hee and the gallowes had reckoned togither. *Dauid* makes more account of Gods fauour then of his kingdome, yea then of his victorie against his enemies, as if he should say, my foes doe not triumph against mee, that is well for mee, but by this I know that thou loueſt me, that is better.

We haue markes to know euerie thing by, saving the loue of God, but of that we thinke we are sure, for we thinke so well of our selues that God must needes loue vs whether wee will or no, as the Papists which set their good works vpon the score, and make God indebted to them for their workes, and therefore wee regard neither the time when, nor the place where, nor the persons by whom, nor the tokens by which the Lorde doth offer to make his loue knowen vnto vs.

When the seruants of *Benhadad* king of *Aram*, went with ropes about their neckes to *Achab* king of Israel, to entreate for their masters life, they gaue diligent heede, if they could catch any thing of *Achabs* mouth that might be a signe of fauour, and when they heard him call *Benhadad* his brother, oh how glad were they? How did they play vp- 1. King. 20. 33

on that world? how did they feed their hope vpon it? they made haste and said, *Thy brother liueth.* The Lorde hath greater aduantage against vs, then euer *Achab* had against *Benhadad*, for he did flie from *Achab*, so can not we from the Lorde, he did hide himselfe from *Achab*, so cannot wee from the Lorde, *Benhadad* had seruants to send to king *Achab*, but what spokesmen shall we sende to the Lord? we must come forth our selues. *Achab* had power but against the bodie of *Benhadad*, the Lorde hath power against both our bodies and soules, king *Achabs* power was subiect to the Lordes power, but who shall withstand the Lordes power, for his counsell shall stand? If *Achab* had exercised his power vpon *Benhadad* it had beene but for a time, but if the Lord should execute his wrath vpon vs, if it were kindled, yea but little, it would flame for euer: nowe if wee did consider these things well, and if we were as much afraid of the king of heauen, as they were of the king of Israel, and if our miserable daungers, and daungerous miseries did as nearely touch vs, as theirs did touch them, we would take as diligent heede to the words of God as they did to the wordes of king *Achab*, and wee woulde bee as glad to heare a worde that might be as a token of fauour, as they were; but alas wee do not consider, wee

are not touched, nor moued, and therefore when the lord doth by his messengers entreat vs to be saued, & wooe vs by al the names, & tokens of loue, we regard not, the Lord open our eies, to see in what a desperate case wee stand, & let vs make more reckoning of Gods loue tokens then wee doe, if not, shall not the *Aramites* rise vp in iudgment against vs?

When the Angell came downe to stirre vp the poole of *Bethesda*, (wherein lay many sicke and diseased) there was wayting on euerie side, and happy was he that could step in first, for he that stept in first after the stirring of the water, was healed, of what disease soeuer he had. We haue a better poole then the poole of *Bethesda*, for the word of God is water of life, and able to cleanse the soule and body too, if we step into it when it is stirred by the Angell of the Lord, how often hath the Lord by his ministers, stirred vp this water that we might be healed by it? no small fauour no doubt. But who waiteth for it? who steppeth into it? Nay! who steppeth not from it rather? who is clensed by it? and yet who hath not need of it? For none can say his heart is cleane. Now if wee make no more reckoning of Gods loue, and his loue tokens then thus, shall not those sicke and diseased men of *Bethesda*, rise vp in iudgement against vs? no doubt they shall. John 5. 2. 3. 4. 5.

We thinke that whatsoeuer wee want, yet wee are sure that God doth loue vs, and neuer make any reckoning of his loue tokens, but wee may be deceiued. *Dauid* was not alwaies so sure, for sometime he thought that the Lord had forgotten him, sometime hee thought that god had giuen him ouer to him selfe, hereupon he cried out at one time, *how long shall thy wrath burne like fire? for euer?* at another time hee prayeth, *O take not thy spirit from mee, restore vnto mee the ioy of my saluation.* by which pittifull cries it may appeare that hee was halfe afraide. Therefore hee was glad to take a loue token when it was offred him, for when he was not sure of Gods loue towards him, he thought that God was angrie with him, and that was of al things most terrible vnto him and intollerable. So must wee, if wee will be sure that God is not angrie with vs, wee must be sure that he fauoureth vs.

Psal. 89. 46.
Psal. 51. 11. 12.

If Gods people must bee sure of Gods fauour towards them in Christ, as *Dauid* teacheth, then we must not stand in doubt of it as papists do teach, wee haue no reason so to doe. For doth hee call vs his sonnes, and wee call him our father, that we shoulde doubt of his loue? Doth hee call vs his friends, his brethren, his spouse, his loue, his doue, and by all the names of loue, that wee should doubt

of

of his loue? Hath hee kissed vs with so manie kisses of his mouth? hath he sent vs so manie pledges of his loue? hath hee renewed his couenants so often? hath hee sealed it with his Sacraments, and bound it with an oth? and all this that we might doubt whether he doth loue vs or no? Thus you see one point of poperie readie to soune at the hearing of this doctrine. If there bee any Papist heere that hath a mind to it, let him take it vp, and make much of it, for Gods people (you see) care not for it, they had rather know for a certaintie that God doth fauour them, then to stand in doubt thereof.

To loue God, and to be loued of God, is all that god requireth of vs, and all that wee desire of god. For if we loue him, then wee feare him, we worship him, we trust in him, we heare him, we obey him, &c. If he loue vs, then he prouideth for vs all good things, and preserueth vs from all that may hurt vs, &c. Our loue to him hath markes, and so hath his to vs. God doth not loue vs and keepe it from vs, but hee maketh it knowen that he loueth vs, as *Ionathan* made his loue knowen to *Dauid* and as the father of the prodigal child made his loue manifest to his sonne when his affection was towards him.

By this I knowe that thou fauourest mee (saith

Dauid) because mine enemies haue not triumphed against me.

When God doth deliuer vs from the hands of our enemies, or anie trouble else, wee may perswade our selues thereby, he hath a fauour vnto vs, as *Dauid* did.

But then it may bee demanded, If God doth loue his church, why doth he suffer his Church to be troubled and molested with enemies? The reason is this, because by this meanes his loue may bee made more manifest, in sauing and deliuering them. For as a sure friend is not knowen but in time of need: so Gods goodnesse and loue is neuer so well perceiued, as it is in helping of vs when wee cannot helpe our selues. As *Adams* fall did
Rom. 5. 20, 21. serue to manifest Gods iustice and mercie, the one in punishing, the other in pardoning of sinne, which otherwise wee had neuer knowne: so the troubles of the Church serue to manifest, first our desertes by reason of our sins, secondly our weakenes and inability to help our selues, & thirdly the louing kindnes of the Lord our God, in sauing and defending, that so we might be truely thankful, and returne all the prayse and glory to God, and none to our selues. So that the Church of God may haue enemies, and yet bee still the beloued of God, as *Lazarus* was beloued of

Christ

Christ although he was sicke: for whom the Lord loueth hee correcteth, and therefore he correcteth them because he loueth them.

Nowe, some men will say, Oh I thanke God I am in prosperitie, and I liue well out of all daunger, and trouble, and I want nothing, therefore I am sure God loueth mee. Againe, such a one serueth God well I warrant you, for you see how hee doth thriue and prosper in the world, he is come vppe of nothing, &c. therefore no doubt God doth loue him: this is the corrupt iudgement of blinde worldlings, which take all for golde that glistreth, and thinke there is no other heauen but earth: but these men deceiue themselues, and so many as listen vnto them, for when God shall neuer visite vs with anie crosse, but shall giue vs all things at our pleasure, and let vs haue what we lust for, it is a signe that hee is angrie with vs, and then wee are neareste to our destruction. For as the oxe that is stall fed, waxeth fatte, and the fatter hee is, the fitter hee is for the Butcher, and the nearer he is to the day of slaughter: so it fareth with the wicked worldlings, which neuer come vnder the crosse, and whose necks could neuer abide the yoke of the word of God, they are set vp a fatting for the butcher of hell, and made ready against the day of slaughter, which is the day of iudgement, Psal. 37

when all these outward, common, and gene-
nerall blessings shall tend to their greater cō-
demnation. They liue at ease in this life, that
they may feele paine in the world to come,
they haue their heauen here, that they may
haue hell hereafter. The greatest iudgement
of God that can be in this worlde, is to let vs
liue in seruitude, and to giue vs ouer to our
owne hearts lust. And this is witnessed by
many places of scripture. Aske *Iob*, and hee
will iustifie this to bee true, for these are his
words.

Iob 21. 7. *Wherefore do the wicked liue and waxe olde,*
& grow in wealth: to shew that a man may be
a wicked man, though he be a wealthie man,
and that honestie goeth not by riches; he go-
8 eth on and saith, *Their seede is established in*
their sight with them, and their generation be-
9 *fore their eies. Their houses are peaceable with-*
10 *out feare, the rod of God is not vpon them Their*
bullocke gendreth and faileth not, their cow cal-
11 *ueth & casteth not hir calfe. They send forth their*
12 *children like sheep, and their sonnes daunce. They*
take the taber and harpe, and reioyce in the sound
13 *of the organs. They spend their dayes in wealth,*
and sodainely they die, or go downe to the graue.
That is, they lie not long sicke, Now see their
14 Religion. *They say vnto God, departe from*
vs, for wee desire not the knowledge of thy
15 *wayes: Who is the almightie, that we shoulde*

ſerue him? and what profit ſhould we haue if we ſhould pray vnto him? Now ſee their end. *They ſhal be as ſtubble before the wind, and as chaffe that the ſtorme carrieth away, God wil lay vp the ſorrow of the father for his children, when hee rewardeth him he ſhall know it: his eies ſhall ſee his deſtruction, and he ſhall drinke of the wrath of the almightie.* Aske the Prophet *Dauid*, and he will iuſtifie as much, for thus he ſpeaketh of the wicked, *They are not in troubles as other men, neither are they plagued with other men Their eies ſtand out for fatneſſe, they haue more then heart can wiſh. They ſet their mouth againſt heauen and their tongue walketh through the earth.* Now ſee their blaſphemy againſt God. *And they ſay, howe doth God know it? or, is there knowledge in the moſt high? Lo, theſe are the wicked, yet proſper they alwayes, and increaſe in riches.* Now ſee their ende. *Surely thou (O Lorde) haſt ſet them in ſlipperie places, and caſt them downe into deſolation. How ſodenly are they diſtroied, periſhed, and horribly conſumed?*

18 19 20 Pſal. 73 5. 7 9 11 12 18 19.

If this bee not ſufficient hee can prooue it by an example of the Iſraelites, of whome he maketh this report, They luſted with concupiſcence in the wildernesſe, meaning when they deſired the fleſh pots of Egypt againe. *And* (ſaith hee) *the Lorde gaue them their deſire* [for hee ſent them quayles] but he ſent leannesſe

Pſal. 106. 14 15

16 leanneſſe into their ſoules [for hee curſed it,
17 and it did them no good, but they died with
18 the meate in their mouthes] *And what became of the reſt that had their deſire, they rebelled againſt Moſes and Aaron.* whereupon the earth ſwallowed vppe ſome, & fire from heauen deuoured other ſome. If you aske the prophet *Eſay* he will auouch this to be ture, for (ſpeaking in the perſon of god to the ſtubburne Iewes) hee ſaith thus, *Wherefore ſhould you bee ſmitten anie more? for you fall away more and more, the whole head is ſicke, and the whole heart is heauie.* Meaning that he would correct them no more, ſeeing they were neuer the better for correction, but to let them doe as they liſted, that his iudgemēt might be exceeding great, & iuſt vpon them.

Eſay. 1.5.

7 For that followeth in the 7. verſe *Your land is waſte, your Cities are burnt with fire, ſtrangers deuour your land in your preſence, and it is deſolate like the ouerthrow of ſtraungers.*
8 *And the daughter of Zion, ſhall remaine like a cottage in a vineyard, like a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, and like a beſieged Citie.* And all this came vpon them, when the Lord left them to themſelues, to doe what they liſted. All which places do ſhewe and prooue howe mad and fooliſh they are, which meaſure Gods loue and fauour towardes them, by outward proſperitie, and his anger by outward

ward aduersitie.

On the contrarie, his children he puts them alwaies in minde of their dutie by whipping them with his fatherly rod. they do not so soone step awrie, but by and by he fetcheth them home againe. What is *Dives* the better for all his wealth, being now in hel tormentes?

Lazarus a poore man, yet a godly man, was kept vnder in this life, but nowe is exalted. And God indeed doth many times keep his children vnder, and giueth them but from hand to mouth, and yet loueth them neuertheleſſe. As a father keepeth his ſonne and heire ſhort, without any money in his purſe, or anie thing elſe at his owne will, till the time come that he ſhall inherite: and in great wiſedome he doth it, for if his ſonne ſhoulde haue the inheritance preſently, he would waſt it, and ſpend it vainely: ſo God dealeth with his children, and for no other cauſe, both in ſingular wiſedome and loue, that they may ſay afterward, *By this I know that thou loueſt mee, &c.*

So that this is not the thing that can aſſure vs of Gods fauour to haue no enemies, and no troubles, for if wee be Gods children, wee muſt looke for both. Therefore is the Church called militant, alwaies in battaile, alwaies beſet with enemies. Therefore is the 1.Cor.1.18.

goſpel

Gospell called the word of the crosse. Therfore S. *Paule* describing the way to heauen saith, *We must passe through many tribulations.* Therefore *Esau* and *Iacob* shall no sooner haue life, but they shall striue together in their mothers bellie. Therefore *Abraham* shall no sooner receiue the promise, but hee must looke to be banished, and therefore *Abel* shall bee enuied of his owne brother, so soone as the Lorde regardes his sacrifice. The righteous man is like *Lot* amongst the Sodomites, and like *Sampson* amongst the Philistines. This is the state of the Church called militant, it is like to a ship tossed with the waues, driuen with the winds, beset with Pirates, on the one side, with rockes and sandes on the other side, alwaies vppon the sea, and when it is safest, there is but a bord between life and death. Their peace is persecution, their rest is labour, their riches is pouertie, their glorie is reproch, their libertie is imprisonment. And yet by this they know that God doth fauour them, because he doth so tẽper these cuppes vnto them, with his grace and holy spirit, that in persecution they finde peace, in labour they finde rest, in pouertie they finde contentment, therefore great riches; in reproch they finde glorie, in imprisonment they find libertie, and in death they find life.

Acts. 14. 22.

It

It is no newe thing to see, for good men to haue enemies, nay the better men, the more enemies, as *Peter*, the more faithful to Christ the more sifted by Sathan, but as Christ then prayed for *Peter*, that his faith might not faile, so hee prayeth still for the faithfull that their faith may not faile, so that stil they may say with *Dauid*. *By this I know that thou louest mee, because mine ennemies doe not triumph against me.* Luke, 22, 32.

But what, did not *Dauids* enemies triumph against him, when they said, *A mischiefe is lighted vpon him, and hee that lyeth shall rise no more.* As appeareth in the eight verse of this Psalme? Why did *Dauid* then so grieuously complaine? The aunswere is at hande, they spake euill indeede of *Dauid*, and as they would haue had it; yea, and as they thought to haue had it too, but the Lorde deliuered him, so that they triumphed before the victory. When they saw that the Lord did a little visit him, they cried out: *Now he is met with-all: nowe hee is downe, &c.* And thus rashly they iudged of the Lordes annointed, and triumphed ouer him, whom the Lorde raised vp againe. So played the Popes Catholikes, when they woulde haue come vpon vs, like the fat Bulles of Basan, gaping vppon vs, as though they woulde haue eaten vs vppe, when they sawe some of our men ouercome

in

in battaile, or when the Lorde did a little frowne vpon vs, they began ſtraightwaie to triumph ouer vs, and marching into Ireland as though all had beene cocke ſure for them, but the Lord put a bridle in their mouthes, &: ſo carried them backe againe by *Senacheribs* way. So likewiſe before they came laſt with their inuincible nauy, they deuided our kingdome, and prouided owners for euerie country, Citie, Biſhopricke, Lordſhip, and whips for euerie body. Indeed they troubled vs, and put many in great feare, but through Gods goodnes the feare was greater then the hurt, by which the Lorde would giue vs to vnderſtand, that hee had a fauour towards vs. And that we might know it indeede, he would not ſuffer vs to deſtroy them, leſt we ſhould ſay that through our owne power we gaue them the ouerthrow, and gat our ſelues the victorie, but with his owne hand, and with his holy arme he gat himſelfe the victorie, that the whole praiſe might returne to himſelfe, and by this we might be aſſured of his loue and fauour towards vs, bleſſed bee his name for it. Surely this was one of the greateſt loue tokens that euer hee beſtowed vpon vs (of temporall benefits) the greatneſſe whereof ſhall appeare when wee conſider how they would haue handled vs, if they had triumphed againſt vs. For this purpoſe let vs take but a

little view. First of their exactions in Naples; secondly of their sauage cruelties vppon the poore Indians, and then shall we see what miseries and mischiefs such a triumph and such triumphers woulde haue brought vppon vs. And first of their exactions of Naples, when they triumphed there. To passe ouer their trecherous entraunce, it is reported by one of their owne Bishops (in a booke that hee wrote to the king of Spaine, for the redresse of these things) that euerie foure or fiue yeers they receiued 200000. or 400000. and a Million of golde. Their landed men were defeated of their lands and houses, if they had not their euidence to shewe (which perhaps might be lost) although they could make iust proofe of their lawful possession and right for a 100 yeares before. The farmer of their butcherie, and powlterie receiueth 300. duckets daily for his fee. Euerie chimney payeth 6. shillings, euerie strumpet three shillings, what should I say if al the payments were laied together, that all the kings had before, they were not comparable to the extraordinarie exactions of Spaniards in Naples.

Exactions of Spaniards in Naples.

As for their cruelties on the poore Indians they are not to be spokē, for they dispeopled more then 10. Realmes greater then all Spaine, Aragon and Portugall. Within 40. yeares they butchered aboue 12. Millions of men

The crueltie of Spaniards in India.

men, women, and infants. They would set vp men and women naked against trees or walles, &c. and woulde lay wagers, who should shoote or throw their darts neareſt the heart, and made a sport of murther, as ordinarily, as wee doe of shooting, or bowling, &c. They would vse to broyle men to death vpon gridirons, especially great men: whereupon it fell out, that certaine Lordes being broyled, foure or fiue, through their pittifull roaring and crying (which they were enforced to make through extremitie of torment) disquieted the captaine that lay not farre off, and to make them hold their peace they had their mouthes stopped with bullets, vntill they were rosted to death. Their cruelties were so great that a certaine Lorde for feare, fled to the Ile of Cuba, where hee was taken and burned, and being exhorted by a frier to die a Catholique, that hee might goe to heauen, he asked the Frier whither the spaniards went when they died, to heauen quoth the Frier. Then I will not goe to heauen saith the Indian Lord, because the spaniards (as you say) go thither, for it is better to goe to hell (said hee) then to come where any Spaniards haue any thing to do.

Another time, a certain Spanish gouernour entring the firme land, a Lorde of the country, to gaine his good will, and to auoide

torture,

torture, met him, and presented him with nine thousand duckets, in recompence whereof they bound him to a stake, and set fire to his feete, whereupon he brought three thousand Castillans more, with which summe this tyrant not satisfied, put fire againe to his feet, vntill the sinewes burst, and the marrowe sprung out of the bones, and so he died. The king of *Mexico* sent a thousand presents to welcome him, besides that, himselfe in his owne person met him with an honourable troupe of Lords and Gentlemen, hee was laden with bolts for his labour, and being in prison, the rest came to solace their king with some pleasant sports and shewes, whereupon they were apprehended by the Spaniardes: a solemne day of slaughter was proclaimed, and at the day appointed two thousand young gentlemen were put to death for a terror to all the countrey.

The same tyrant going to warre against any Citie or prouince would yoke many together by the neckes, allowing no sustenance to twentie thousand, but the flesh of so many Indians as they could kill. They had as ordinary a shambles of mans flesh, as wee haue of beastes: they kept mastifes, and other great dogs to hunt men and women, from which a woman seeing shee could by no meanes escape, she went and hanged her selfe vpon a

Reade more of these things in a booke called A complaint of England, and the Spanish cruelties.

tree, with her babe tyed at her feete, and yet before her babe was dead, the dogges came and deuoured it. Another, hunting veniſon, could find no game, and comming homward he met a woman with a childe in her armes, he tooke her infant, and cut it in peeces, and threwe it to his dogges for liuerie. It is not poſsible (as one ſaith) to vtter in words the mercileſſe dealing of Spaniards in *India*, the gaſtly remembrance whereof is able to daunt the ſtouteſt courage. Yet theſe are the men which pretend ſupporting of the catholique faith. Nowe, by this taſt we may giue a geſſe how our cup ſhould haue beene tempered, if the Lord had ſuffered them to triumph euer vs; for if they handled theſe poore ſoules after this manner, which neuer did hurt them, nor their religion, how wold they haue handled vs, which alwaies haue beene enemies to their irreligious proceedings? ſurely their hatred againſt vs, woulde haue proued like *Nebuchadnezzars* furnace, ſeauen times hotter then it was before: yea they would haue ſent vs *Rehoboams* meſſage, and his meaſure, *viz.* that their *little fingers ſhoulde haue beene greater vppon vs then their loines were vppon them.* And whereas they did burthen them with a grieuous yoke, they would haue made our yoke heauier: and whereas they chaſticed them with rods, they would haue

Dan. 3. 19.

1. King. 12. 10. 11.

corrected

corrected vs with scorpions, if they had triumphed ouer vs, as they made full account. By this then wee may know that the Lorde loueth vs, (alas a nation not worthie to bee loued) because our enemies did not triumph against vs. Blessed be his name for euer.

But doth God loue none, but those whome hee deliuereth out of their enemies handes? Yes surely, that he doth: for it is no matter how we be ouercome of our bodily enemies, so that our spirituall ennemies doe not ouercome vs. For euerie Christian hath two sorts of enemies as *Dauid* had, bodily, and spirituall: our spitituall enemies bee our sinnes, and the temptations of the worlde, the flesh and the deuill which fight against our soule (as saint *Peter* saith.) Now these doe often trouble the children of God, rebelling against them, and many times leading them captiues to the law of sinne; yet finally they doe not triumph against them, because they doe not willingly yeeld themselues to sinne, with delight in sinne, as the wicked doe: but they do continually striue against them by earnest prayer vnto God, by hearing the worde of God, and by faith in Iesus Christ, they are made more then conquerours in the ende, as S. *Paul* teacheth in his doctrine to the Rom.

1. Pet. 2. 11

Rom. 7. 23.

Rom. 8. 37.

By this I know that thou fauourest me, &c.

Without doubt the Prophet *Dauid* had

neede of many blessings mo, which the Lord did not bestowe vppon him, but kept them backe from him, and all to humble him: and yet did he not murmure against God, for the want of them, but gaue him thankes for those which he had already receiued. Although the Lord did not suffer him to take any rest, because of his ennemies, yet hee praysed God, because they did not triumph against him, a good lesson for vs to learne. When the Lorde shall afflict vs with anie maner of affliction: as, losse of goods, losse of friends, losse of health, or anie thing else, we should remember then, what benefits wee haue still, which we are vnworthie of. Then thus may Gods children say to God: Though the papists do molest vs, and speake all euill of vs, though our enemies seeke and sift vs, yet they misse of their purpose, and thou dost raise vppe friends vnto vs. Though Atheists, scoffers, & worldly beasts do flout at thy preachers, yet thou dost not let them discorage them, wherby we knowe that thou loueſt vs. And hath the Lorde taken away thy goods? &c. yet remember that he hath giuen thee leaue to enioy thy sight, thy speech, thy hearing, thy vnderstanding, thy wits, his spirit, &c. all which are more then thou deseruest, and more then he doth for euery one. So we may say for matters of reformation, although euerie thing be

not

not in all respects as it shoulde bee, and as it were to be wished, yet let vs thanke the Lord for these good things we haue. Though the growth of the Church be yet hindred by manie ignorant ministers and idle nonresidents, yet hath the Church many good Pastours and teachers, to whome the porter Iesus Christ hath opened the doore, and furnished with singular graces, for the good of his church. Let vs thanke his maiestie for them, and not as some doe, which for the want of some things, condemne all the things which we haue, because the church (forsooth) is not so purely purged as it ought to bee, therfore we haue no Church, no ministers, no Sacraments, &c. as it please our schismatique to affirme, and therefore in a mad rage being carried with pride and tempestuous spirites, whose glorie is altogether in condemning their brethren, they crie, separate your selues, come out from amongst them, as though we had nothing left amongst vs, which might be a token of Gods fauour and loue towards vs. Ah my good brethren! is this to shewe our selues thankfull for that wee haue receiued? shal we acknowledge nothing good, because all is not perfect? wee ought to striue orderly, and lawfully (I confesse) vnto perfection if it may bee, that *Zion* may shine in perfect beautie. But in the meane while let vs feare

that the Lorde for our vnthankfulneſſe, and ſoornefull contempt will take away thoſe good things which we haue, before hee giue vs any more. If we ſhoulde want nothing, we would waxe wanton, and forget the Lorde, as *Dauid* did, who thought when god had made him ſtrong, he ſhould neuer bee moued, and therefore to humble vs, and keepe vs vnder, the Lord ſtill keepeth ſomewhat from vs.

Pſal. 30. 6.

But now let vs ſee what vſe wee may make of all that hath beene ſaide, wee haue heard that the Lord doth not onely loue vs, but alſo that he maketh his loue knowen vnto vs, by ſauing vs from the cruell handes of our enemies: this is no ſmall matter, for the Lorde to beſtow ſuch loue vpon his enemies, which deſerue nothing but his hatred and heauie diſpleaſure, ſhould not this make vs loue the Lord againe? That we doe, will euerie one be readie to ſay, but if you loue mee (ſaith our Sauiour Chriſt, keepe my commandements: who is it now that will ſay, we loue God, and yet for the loue that hee beareth to vs, and wee to him, many will not leaue one iot of their pleaſure, nor any vnlawfull gaine? no nor a haire of their head? by this wee may be ſure that wee hate the Lord. The vſurer, and whoremonger will ſay they loue God: ſo will the ſwearer, and the drunkard ſay, when their whole life is nothing, but a warre a-

Iohn. 14. 15.

gainſt

gainſt God. You prophane the Lords Sabboth, and refuſe to heare his word when it is preached, and yet you will ſay you loue God, a pitifull loue. The ſcoffer at religion, and euery hypocrite, will tell vs that hee loueth God, or elſe it were hard, when yet they will do nothing that God commandeth them. Iohn. 21. 15.

If you loue mee (ſaith Chriſt to *Peter*) *feede my flocke*, to ſhew, that if miniſters feede not the flocke of Chriſt, with the foode of their ſoules, the liuely preaching of the word, they loue not Chriſt: and yet both ignorant miniſters, negligent Paſtors, and careleſſe non-reſidents, will beare men in hand they loue God, O cruell loue that ſuffreth mens ſoules to ſinke downe to hell with their owne, for whome the Lord Ieſus hath ſhed his bloud. You magiſtrates wil ſay you loue God, if you do ſo indeede let it appeare in countenancing his worde when it is preached, and encouraging his miniſters, in reforming the ſabboth, in ſuppreſsing of lewdneſſe, in vpholding of goodneſſe, and iudging iuſtly; which if you do not, by this you may be ſure you loue not God. If you loue me, ſaith Chriſt, loue one another, to teach vs, that if wee loue not one another, profeſsing all the ſame Goſpell, wee loue not Chriſt, for he that loueth him which begat, loueth him alſo which is begotten, and hee that loueth the head muſt needes loue the Iohn. 13. 34. 1. Iohn. 5. 1.

members. Now if wee delight ſtill in quarrelling, and contending one with another, in cenſuring, and iudging one of another for toyes and trifles, in ſpiting, and vexing, in miſtaking and miſconſtruing, in racking and rending, of wordes and halfe wordes, if we continue ſtill in bitterneſſe and wrath, in malice and enuie, and will not be content to be curteous and louing, and in the bowels of tender compaſsion, freely to forgiue as god for Chriſt his ſake forgaue vs, wee may bee ſure wee loue not God. Againe, if you loue me (ſaith Chriſt) do good to the poore, which you ſhall alwaies haue with you, and looke vvhat you doe to them, I will take it as if it were done to my ſelfe: nowe if vvee bee ſo ſtraight laced againſt the poore, as wee haue bene, and do not exerciſe the vvorks of mercie towards them according to our abilitie, how can vve ſay that we loue God? I meane not to bee a proctor for the idle, and ſlouthfull, vvhich can vvorke and vvill not, for they ought not to eate, and in Gods name let them be driuen to vvorke, or be ſeuerely puniſhed: for if you ſhall maintaine ſuch, vvhen time ſhall ſerue, they vvill cut your throats for that you haue, to make you amends, like *Hanun* vvho cruelly and ſhamefully, entreated *Dauids* meſſengers, vvhen of curteſie, and goodvvill, they vvere ſent to viſite him: but releeue

Ephes. 4. 31. 32.

2. Sam. 10. 4.

releeue while you may those that are impotent, aged, sickly, diseased, and labour hard for their liuing, and would worke if they had it, see to such I beseech you on Christs behalf, and encourage the vertuous and godly amongst you, you vse to say, *God helpe you, I haue not for you*, a cold almes God knoweth, but if God had suffred our ennemies to triumph ouer vs, then we should haue said: *God helpe vs, wee haue neither for you, nor for our selues*; therefore while you haue wealth and are able, doe good withall, doe not belye the lord, that hath giuen you both for your selues and for them too, for in such time you may speake it, that your words may proeue truer then you wot of, as it did with *Ananias* and his wife, who said they had no more left, whē they had as much more as they sold. Furthermore if we be assured that the Lord loueth vs in Iesus Christ, we may be bolde to praie without feare, and not doubting that hee will heare vs. Acts. 5.3.

Last of all this assurance of Gods fauour, shoulde breede in vs a resolution to leaue all our odde shifts and deuises, which we vse to liue by, and to rely wholy vppon his prouidence, vsing no meanes but good, knowing that hee which loueth vs, will not see vs want any thing that hee seeth good for vs. These things may trouble vs, but if they do nor triumph

umph ouer vs, by ouerruling vs, when we are beloued of God: striue we then by faith and repentance against our affections, and in the end we shal surely triumph in heauen, for the Church cannot be triumphant in heauen vntill it be militant on earth: *Now let vs pray,*

THE SECOND SERMON OF THE ASSVRANCE OF GODS LOVE.

Nouember, 21. Sabboth day.

By this I know that thou fauourest mee, &c.

THe Prophet *Dauid* careth not what ennemies he hath, nor how many hee hath, so that God bee not his enemie, hee regardeth not what the Lorde doth vnto him, neither how he doth handle him, so that he may be sure he doth it in his loue & fauour towardes him, and not in his wrath and displeasure: therefore he prayeth, *Lord rebuke mee not in thy wrath, neither chasten mee in thy*

Psal. 6. 1.

displeasure

displeasure, as if he should say, I care not, O Lorde, what thou dost with mee in this life, so that I may be sure of thy fauor and louing kindnesse.

This serueth to teach vs, that when anie trouble or affliction shall come vpon vs, wee must not so much looke vpon that, and seeke to be eased thereof, as to looke whether we be in fauour with God or no. And being sure of his fauour in his sonne Iesus Christ, to arme our selues patiently to beare the crosse whatsoeuer it bee, because whatsoeuer it is, outwarde, or inward, it is layed vppon vs in loue, not to hurt vs, but to helpe vs forward in the waies of godlinesse. We will take any thing well at his handes, of whome wee are perswaded that hee loueth vs, for the assurance of his loue swalloweth vp, and sweetly sendeth downe all the rest: if he teach vs, we take it, if he admonish vs, wee are contented, if he reproueth vs, wee put it vp, if he iest with vs, we are not greeued, yea, if hee smite vs, we are not offended, all is taken in good part, because they come from loue, who neuer did hurt his beloued. So. God dealeth with vs his children, he teacheth vs when wee are ignorant, he correcteth vs, when wee goe astray, hee admonisheth vs, when we are vnruly, hee reproueth vs when wee transgresse, hee threatneth vs when wee are stubburne,

and

and hee smiteth vs when there is no remedie, but in his fauour and mercie he teacheth, correcteth, reproueth, threatneth, and smiteth his children, that they might not be damned with the wicked world. If he woundeth vs, his fauour is oyle to cure the wound, if hee sendeth floudes, and seas of troubles, the assurance of his fauour is like *Noahs* Arke to beare vs vppe from drowning. If his wrath shall burne like fire, his fauour is water to coole the heate, whereof *Dives* in hell coulde not get a drop: if hee send sickneſſe either of body or minde, the assurance of his fauour is a present remedy, like the brasen Serpent: if hee send sorrow ouer night, his louing fauour shall bring ioy in the morning, and a ioyfull tidings like, *Sonne bee of good cheare, thy sinnes are forgiuen thee*: if hee chide vs, his fauour that hee beareth vnto vs, will not suffer him to chide for euer: if his wrath bee kindled against his children, his fauour puts out all againe, if he sets vs vp as markes to be shot at, hee sets his fauour before vs, with the assurance whereof we are defended as with a shield.

Psal. 5. 12.

When he punisheth his children he pitieth them, for he doth not punish them as an enemie, but as a father, therefore *Dauid* sayth, *As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lorde compassion on all those that*

Psal. 103. 13.

feare

feare him. A fathers anger is rather loue then anger, and his correction is to be counted rather a loue token then a punishment: So is Gods anger towardes his children which feare him, and keepe his couenants: and therfore his correction is a loue token and no punishment.

Aske *Salomon*: and hee will tell you so, nay the Lorde himselfe will tell you so, *if hee sinne* (saith the Lorde) meaning by *Salomon*) *I will chasten him with the rodde of men, and with the plagues of the children of men, but my mercie shall not depart away from him, as I tooke it from Saul, whome I put away before thee.* Aske *Adam* and *Eue*, and they will tell you so, for in punishing their first sinne, hee wrapped vp a blessing within the curse, saying to the Serpent, *that the seede of the woman shoulde breake his head*, meaning that Christ should weaken the power of sin and of death, such was his loue that hee coulde scarce punish for loue. Aske *Dauid* and hee will tell you so. *The Lorde hath chastened mee sore* (saith hee) belike then hee was very angry) *but hee hath not deliuered mee vnto death.* Therefore hee made his choise to fall into Gods handes, rather then into mens handes, because (saith hee) the Lord is mercifull in correcting. Who would not be contēt nowe to beare whatsoeuer in his life such a

2. Sam. 7. 19. 15

Gen 3. 15.

Psal. 118. 18.

2. Sam. 24. 14.

God

God should lay vpon him? When Iesus wept ouer *Lazarus*, the Iewes saide, *beholde howe he loueth him*: yea, though he suffred death, to cast him into his graue the common bed of all flesh, yet behold howe hee loued him. So may Gods children say, when the Lorde correcteth, or reproueth, or afflicteth them, yet marke how hee loueth vs, entreateth vs, and wooeth vs, and when wee see this, wee must needes say, *beholde how hee loueth vs*. *Sechem* deferred not to do all that was required of him, for the obraining of *Dinah*, *because he loued her*. So when we stand in neede of the Lords helpe, hee deferreth not to helpe vs, because he loueth vs. *Dallila* saide to *Sampson*, how canst thou say, *that thou louest mee, seeing that thy heart is not with mee? thou hast mocked me these three times*. But who can say that the Lord doth not loue his children, seeing both his heart and his mind is with them, and hee neuer mockt them? When the Lord doth crosse his people, he dealeth with them as *Ioseph* delt with his brethren, which because it is so liuely a resemblaunce of the Lordes proceeding with vs, wee will a little compare the one with the other: both for our comfort, and also for our instruction. When *Ioseph's* brethren came to Egypt to buy corne, *Ioseph knewe them, and spake roughly vnto them, and bare them in hand that they came as spies:*

John. 11. 35.

Gen. 34. 19.

Iudg. 16. 15.

Gen. 42. 7.

ſpies: ſo the Lorde dealeth with his children many times, when they come to him for ſuch things as they want. *Hee knoweth them well inough, but maketh himſelfe ſtraunge vnto them, and ſpeaketh roughly vnto them*, by ſeeming to denie their requeſt, yea ſometimes by encreaſing their ſorrow and affliction, as *Iacob* ſtriuing with the Angell for a bleſsing receiued a blow on his thigh more then hee looked for. Gen. 32. 24. to 30.

Well, *Ioſeph* turned from his brethren and wept, for hee loued them, but hee kept it ſecret to himſelfe a while: ſo the Lorde loueth his children, when hee handleth them verie roughly, but hee keepeth it ſometime ſecret for a while. Further, it is ſaide of *Ioſeph*, that hee tooke *Simeon* from them, and bounde him before their eies: nowe all this while *Ioſeph* knewe his brethren, but they knew not him: for if they had knowen it had been their brother *Ioſeph* which loued them, no doubt they would haue borne anie thing at his handes. So if wee knew our troubles to come from our father which loueth vs, would wee not willingly beare anie thing at his hands too? Afterward *Beniamin* muſt go, thē *Iacob* thought hee had beene robbed of al his children, but hee founde *Ioſeph*, *Simeon* and *Beniamin*, and all againe at the laſt. So Gods children in the end find al, when they thinke Verſe. 8

they

they haue loſt all. Well, *Beniamin* goeth: and when hee is come, *Ioſeph* reaſoneth the matter with him thus, *Is this your brother of whome you tolde me? &c.* Hee knewe it well inough, but before he could goe any further his affection was ſo inflamed towardes his brother, that he made haſt, and ſought where to weepe: all this while he loued them dearly, but kept it to himſelfe. After all this ſee a ſecond triall no whit inferior to the former, As they went home, hue and crie came after them for *Ioſephs* cup, which was in pollicie conueyed into their brother *Beniamins* ſacke; ſearch was made, they thought themſelues cleare, ſo do we many times iuſtifie our ſelues, they did afterwarde condemne themſelues, and when it was found in *Beniamins* ſacke, they were worſe apaide then they were before. Well *Beniamin* muſt ſtay by the reckoning, and anſwere the matter, this paſſed all the reſt: ſo doth the Lorde many times finde out ſinne by vs, when wee thinke all is well: and then things goe worſe and worſe with vs (as we thinke): and yet ſtill the feare is greater then the hurt. Well, heereuppon *Iudah* draweth neare to *Ioſeph*, and ſayth, *Let mee ſpeake but one worde in theeares of my Lorde*, and tels him a long ſtorie of the whole matter, from the beginning to the ending, as though *Ioſeph* all this while had knowne no-

Chap. 23. 29. 30.

Chap. 44.

thing

thing of the matter. So we oftentimes in the griefe of our hearts powre forth many things and complaints which the Lorde knoweth well inough. Now after many trialles, it is Gen. 45. 1. saide that *Ioseph* coulde no longer refraine before all that stoode by, but cried, *Haue forth euerie man from mee*: which being done, hee wept and cried, so that all heard him, both of the Egyptians and of *Pharaohs* house. And at the last his loue brake foorth like the morning light, and ouerfloweth after long restraint, as a streame (whose course is stopped) ouerflowveth the bankes. Nowv marke howv hee vttereth himselfe, *I am Ioseph* (sayth he) *is my father aliue? but his brethren coulde not answere him, for they were astonished at his presence*: full little did they thinke that *Ioseph* had beene so neare them, they did not once dreame of any such matter, or of anie such man. Euen so the hande of God is manie times in tempering of afflictions to the godly to their good, when they thinke ful little vppon it. But againe (saith *Ioseph*) I *am Ioseph your brother, whome you solde into Egypt*, (well fare all good tokens) *come neare I pray you vnto mee, bee not sadde nor greeued with your selues that you solde mee, for it was Gods doing for your preseruation*. Afterwarde they and their father, and all his house came vp and had Egypt to inhabite: after the like

maner dealeth God with his children as *Ioseph* dealt with his brethren, but after many trials hee vttereth himselfe vnto them, hee puts them in good remembrance of their iniuries done to his maiestie: hee freely forgiueth them, and giueth them the inheritance at the last, which is more then they deserue, and more then they desired, and more then they looked for, by which they are assured of Gods fauour vnto them. Therefore who will not bee content with patience to beare what triall soeuer this our louing God, and mercifull Father shall thinke good to lay vppon him?

Although Israel were hardly entreated of Egypt, yet God said, *I will get this people fauour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that when yee go yee shall not go emptie.* Now if the Israelites went not away emptie, when they were in fauour with the Egyptians, much lesse shall wee goe away emptie from the Lorde if wee bee in fauour with him: for seeing hee hath of his free mercie, without any desert of ours giuen vs his onely sonne, howe shall he not with him (saith saint *Paule*) *giue vs al things else?* Heereuppon it came that the Martirs were alwaies so iocond and merrie, for they were neuer sent away emptie from the barre, from the prison, from the stake, nor from the fire, but still the Lorde filled their

Exod. 3. 21

Rom. 8. 32.

hearts

hearts with ioy and gladnes, and euer sustained their soules with the comfortable assurance of his fauour: and so fast as their persecutors condemned them, God iustified them, so fast as they stript them, their God clothed them, so fast as they tormented them, their God did comfort them: when they impouerished, God enritched: when they frowned, God smiled: when they spoiled the outward man, God renewed the inward man: when they wounded, god healed, when they killed, God quickned: and finally when they reiected them, their God receiued them, wherby they were not only assured that he loued thē, but also were encouraged to beare whatsoeuer came for the assurance of Gods fauour, so deare & precious was it vnto them. Therfore *Salomon* saith that louing fauonr is aboue gold and siluer: if the louing fauour of men be aboue gold and siluer, how shall wee value the louing faucur of God? which being lost, the whole worlde and ten thousand worlds cannot redeeme, which being obtained is better then the whole world. And tenne thousand worlds, which all the deuils in hell can neuer take it from Gods children, when they haue once the assurance thereof in their hearts, sealed vp vnto them by the spirit of adoption. I say once againe, where?t, or at what price shal we value this fauour of our God? Pron. 22.1

When Iob was aſſured of this louing fauour of God in the heate of his affliction, he was ſo farre from ſhrinking, or ſinking down vnder his burthen, that he ſaid like a valiant ſouldier, *though hee kill me, yet will I truſt in him.* As if he ſhould ſay, I loue my life well, but I loue Gods fauour better, to teach vs, that if wee bee aſſured of his louing fauour once, wee care not what wee ſuffer in this life for it, no more then Iob did, for he knew that Gods killing, would proue a quickning. So that all our care and cunning (my beloued in the Lorde) muſt bee to ſee the louing fauour of God in all our temptations, troubles, and afflictions. And then, as *Ieboram* ſaid to *Iehu*, when he marched in his furie, *Commeſt thou peaceably?* as if hee ſhoulde ſay, if thou comeſt peaceably, march as furiouſly as thou wilt: So let vs ſay to our God, O Lorde, comeſt thou fauourably, and in loue againſt vs? then come as terribly as thou wilt. Shoote thy arrowes, and ſpend them all vppon mee, beate mee to pouder, take all away, and in this life do with mee what thou wilt, ſo thou doſt aſſure mee of thy fauour. So wee pray in that prayer, which is called the Lordes prayer. *Thy will be done*, but Lorde forgiue vs our ſinnes, and then doe what thou wilt, deliuer vs from euill, and from the deuill, and then tempt vs, or bring vs into what

2. King. 9. 20. 22.

battailes

battailes it pleaseth thee. So reasoneth the Prophet *Dauid* likewise, *Happie are they whose Oxen are strong to labour*, happie are they which are free from forraine infusion, and ciuill dissention, which abound with many outwarde, worldly, and generall benefits. &c. but howe if wee misse of these outwarde things? why then, *happie is the people whose God is the Lorde*. So againe, in another place he makes the very same reckening, *Many* (saith hee) *will say, who will shewe vs any good*, that is wordly good, *but Lorde lift thou vppe the light of thy countenance vppon vs, &c.* to teach vs that we must not care what we want, so that wee may be sure of Gods louing countenannce in the Gospell of his sonne Iesus Christ. The woman of Chanaan was content to take manie repulses at the handes of our Sauiour, so that shee might bee sure of one graunt: so let vs be content to take many repulses, so that wee may be sure of God: fauour in our repulses. The birth of the child into the worlde, swalloweth vp all the paines and panges of the mother in forgetfulnesse, which went before the birth: so saith our sauiour Christ. So wee, if after our manifolde afflictions and sorrowes for Christ his sake, wee bring foorth the assurance of Gods fauour heere, and of eternall life heereafter being dead, let forgetfulnesse deuour and con-

Psalm. 144. last.

Psal. 4. 6.

Mat. 15. 26.

ſume all the reſt. And ſeeing as the Lorde in his louing fauour doth thus and thus croſſe his children, let patience beare it, let forgetfulneſſe weare it, and by this let vs learne to truſt in our God, another time without fainting or ſhrinking, when troubles come againe. The wicked blinde world takes another courſe, they caſt their eye altogether vppon the croſſe, and ſtudie how to be eaſed of that, with odde ſhiftings, and many vnlawfull deuiſes and vngodly practiſes, but becauſe they ſee not the louing fauour of God towardes them in Chriſt Ieſus, they are readie to ſinke downe in diſpaire of mercie, and horrour of conſcience, like a lumpe of lead in the ſea. The Lord in one hand hath fire to burne, & in the other hand water to quench, but hee holdeth it behinde his backe many times, that at the firſt it is not perceiued, no, not of his deare children, but at the laſt they both ſee it, and feele the comfort of it, and acknowledge the ſame, ſaying with *Dauid*, *By this I know that thou fauoureſt mee, &c.* Therefore as the child is glad when the father ſmileth vpon him, and ſpeaketh comfortably vnto him, although hee beates him, ſo let vs bee glad and reioyce, when our heauenly father doth ſmile vpon vs, in giuing vs the aſſurance of his loue, although hee doth afflict vs.

By

By this I knowe that thou fauoureſt mee, becauſe mine ennemies do not, &c.

Here further we are to conſider of the prouidence and wiſedome of god, in that he turneth the rage and malice of our enemies to our great good, for by this he *aſſureth vs of his fauour, which is the greateſt good that is:* Thus you ſee that the enemies of Gods children do them good againſt their wil, the Lord by his euer waiting prouidence ſo diſpoſing their enterpriſes, and working in the hearts of his children: for Gods prouidence doth firſt worke and bring to paſſe good things, ſecondly it permitteth euil things to be done: but then thirdly it directeth and ordereth, all things both good and bad in his owne glory, and to the ſaluation of his children. So God turned *Adams* fall to the manifeſting of his owne glorie, and to *Adams* good; for by this meanes, had *Adam* experience of Gods great and infinite mercie, and might ſay, *By this I knowe that thou fauoureſt mee, becauſe thou forgaueſt mee, and didſt not ſuffer the Deuill to triumph againſt mee*, ſo all the ſlippes and falles of Gods children are turned to their good, in as much as by them they are made more fearefull of ſinne, and more watchfull ouer their waies, as the childe is fearefull of

the candle when hee hath once burnt his finger in the flame. And S. *Paul* telleth vs from God, that all things shall fall out for the good, yea for the best, to them that loue God. Now of this point wee may make a very holy vse. It serueth first to confirme and vphold our faith in the prouidence of God, and not to feare the endeuours of the wicked, because we see that God doth stil dispose of thē to our good if we be his children. Againe this may stand vs in good stead, when our affections begin to boyle, in the burning desire of reuenge against our enemies, would wee bee reuēged of them? The best way to be reuenged of our enemies, is to pittie their case, and to make that profit of them, which *Dauid* did of his, that is, stil to look to God in them, then shall wee bee sure to be no loosers, but gainers by them, whether they will or no.

Rom. 8. 28.

But heere some may demaund and say, *Doth God vse to handle his beloued so?* or may a man bee sure of Gods fauour being besette with so manie ennemies, and ouerwhelmed with such heapes of troubles, especially sinne being the cause, wherewith God is prouoked to anger? To which wee may aunswere, that sinne indeede is the cause of all our troubles, but yet whatsoeuer the Lorde layeth vpon his children heere, it is not a punishment for their sinne, for that was discharged

ged by the helliſh ſuffering of the Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, but it is a fatherly correction, from which we are no more freed by the death of Chriſt, then wee are freed from our naturall death. And it is layed vpon vs by our heauenly father for two principall cauſes, firſt to preuent ſinne which wee might fall into, as preſumption, contempt, vnthankefulneſſe, forgetfulneſſe of God, and manie moe. Secondly, they are layed vppon vs as Phiſicke to cure and heale ſinnes, which wee are already fallen into, and this is that which *Dauid* confeſſeth, when hee ſaith, *before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but nowe I keepe thy worde*: and therefore he ſaith, *It was good for him to be afflicted, that hee might learne the ſtatutes of the Lord.* And in both theſe endes of our afflictions, the Lordes purpoſe is to ſtay vs that wee runne not with the wicked world headlong into damnation, whome hee hath giuen ouer to themſelues. So that troubles and enemies are ſent to vs the children of God, as phiſicke: and therewithal he ſends a priuate meſſenger to tell vs that hee loueth vs for all that, and it is becauſe he loueth vs, & to the end that wee may be aſſured that he loueth vs, and that meſſenger is his ſpirit of adoption, which rectifieth our ſpirits that wee are the children of God. And this being once made ſure, then all is ſure. But nowe the queſtion

Pſal. 119. 67. 71

1. Cor. 11. 32.

Eſay. 1. 5

Rom. 8. 15.

A needefull queſtion.

stion is, by what ordinarie meanes the spirit of adoption doth conuey this certificate of Gods fauor vnto the hearts of Gods children in their afflictions? for as God doth assure his children of his louing fauour in Christ Iesus, so he doth it by ordinarie meanes, which meanes being not vsed, or neglected, this assurance faileth, and falleth from vs, and nothing remaineth but either a bare fancie flotting in the aire, in stead of a sure faith builded on a firme foundation, and when trouble comes, an impatient spirit to beare vppe the burden; and when death comes, a heape of sorrow, and a heauie waight of dispaire to presse downe to the lowest hels. The meanes then by which the spirit of God doth worke this assurance in the hearts of the godly, is the preaching of the gospell, which is called glad tidings, because it makes the hearts of the faithfull to become ioyfull and glad. And S. *Paule*, (to put vs out of doubt that the spirite worketh not without the word of God) calleth the worde, *the sword of the spirit*, to teach vs that howsoeuer the spirite of God must beate downe Sathan, and cut downe infidelitie, impatiencie, despaire, presumption, and all other vnrulie affections, & howsoeuer it worketh faith, patience, ioy, strength courage, &c. yet all this it effecteth and bringeth to passe by the meanes of the worde of God

The meanes wherby the assurance of Gods fauour is wrought.

Ephe. 6, 17.

Esay. 11, 2.

god, preached, read, heard, marked, and meditated vppon; for as the word without the spirit is but dead to the hearer, so the spirite of god without the opening of gods will in his word doth not ordinarily giue this comfortable assurance of gods loue. Aske the Prophet *Dauid* himselfe, who had this comfortable assurance of gods fauour in affliction; aske him (I say) howe he came by it, or how it came to him, and hee will tell vs that by the worde of god he came vnto it, for so he saith; *Except thy lawe had beene my delight, I hadde perished in my affliction*: for therein he founde many gracious promises of his god, both for the punishing of his enemies, for the defending and rewarding of himselfe, and all gods seruaunts, and for the forgiuenesse of his sinnes, which were the cause of all his troubles, and therefore the promise of god hee chalengeth at gods hand, *Remember thy promise made to thy seruaut, wherein thou hast caused mee to trust*: vppon this promise of god hee resteth and stayeth himselfe, *It is my comfort in my trouble, for thy promise hath quickned mee*. And when hee looked into this booke of god, the storehouse of his promises, there hee found also how necessarie affliction was for him, he found the causes thereof, and what vse to make of all his ennemies, and so through the inwarde working of the spirite

Psal. 119. 92.

Verse. 49. 50.

of

of sanctification, hee behaued himselfe at all times accordingly, and therefore when hee saith, it was good for him that hee was afflicted, hee addeth, *that hee might learne the statutes of the Lord*, to shew that the godly doe not know how good their afflictions be, vntil they haue learned the statutes of the Lorde. And therefore at another time hee said, that he was much moued at the prosperitie of the wicked, and had much ado to keepe himselfe in an innocent, and vpright life, hearing, and seeing the wicked so farre out of square, vntill he went into the house of God, and when he came into that schoole once, he was taught by the word and the spirite of God, what vse to make of all: and then he sawe how wisely and iustly the Lord ordereth all things in the world, to teach vs, that it is impossible for vs, to make right vse of troubles, and to beare our selues in prosperitie and aduersitie as wee ought, vntill wee become schollers to the word of God, and submit our selues vnto the same.

ver. 67. Psal. 73. 13. 14. 16. 17. 18.

Nowe as the worde of God is the meanes of this comfortable assurance, so it is not alwaies effectuall to worke this assurance vnto vs, except we vse it as it shoulde be vsed of vs, some thinke it sufficient to haue it in their house, like the tallent hid in the napkin. Some thinke it inough to heare it read at church,

or

or to reade it themselues at home: some think it necessarie to be preached and expounded, but not materiall whether they come at the preaching or no, like *Micah* who thought himselfe safe when he had a *Ieuite in his house*: some thinke it sufficient if they heare it, but they will bee at their choise whether to beleeue it or no: some giue credit vnto it, thinking it to be true, & hold that to be sufficient: whē they come neither reuerently, nor humbly prepared vnto it, but will be at libertie to descant vpon it, and to censure both preaching and preacher at their pleasure, like the proude cauilling auditors of *Ezechiel*, which talked and iested against him, when they were amongst themselues, and made as much account of his preaching, as of a fidlers song. Some thinke it sufficient if they heare it once a yeere, once a moneth, or once a quarter: some thinke it sufficient if the word sound in a Church, it is no matter out of whose mouth it come, whether the speaker haue a calling or no calling, but the parish clarke and the parish priest is all one to them. But if they haue a preacher, then all is cocke sure on their side, then they must needes bee sure of Gods loue. Some againe thinke the plaine and bare word of god not sufficient to worke this comfortable assurance, without a mixture of Rhetoricke, Philosophy, Schoole-trickes,

Iudg. 17. 13.

Ezec. 33. 32.

Poetrie

Poetrie, profane writings, greeke and Latin, and merrie iests, &c. as they that crie, *Prophesie of newe wine, and strong drinke*, and if they haue these things clattering about their eares, then they goe away from the Church as full as a bladder filled with wine. And some again hold opinion, that if the preacher stand neuer so little aboue his houre at anie time, it is inough to marre all that went before. And some thinke, that if there bee anie mention made of gods iudgements against their sinnes, it is inough to driue them to despaire, and so quite from the exercises. And many post off all hearing of the word, or vsing any holy exercise of religion, vntill they be stricken with age or sickneſſe, like the foolish Virgins, which put off all to the last cast. Now all these would bee assured of gods fauour when affliction doth assaile them, yea and thinke themselues sure of it, howsoeuer the world shall goe with them; but they all deceiue themselues. First, they which thinke the bare reading of it to be sufficient, but the expounding and applying thereof, to bee a needlesse thing, they deceiue themselues: for as reading is a good and holy meanes for the confirmation of faith, and the consolation of the inward man, so without the opening of the word, and applying of the same, this comfortable assurance of gods louing fauour is

The first sort.

not

not ordinarily wrought, whereby the ſoule is brought to reſt in the bed of peace. For proofe whereof wee are to liſten to the voice of god himſelf which is the beſt iudge in this behalfe. *Iob* both handleth the caſe, and determineth the caſe very plainely, *A man is ſtricken with ſorrow vppon his bedde, and the griefe of his bones is ſore, So that his life cauſeth him to abhorre bread, and his ſoule daintie meate. His fleſh faileth that it cannot bee ſeene, and his bones clatter, So that hee draweth to the graue, and his life to the burigers,* meaning that his affliction both of body & ſoule is ſo extreame, that by meanes thereof hee is brought to deaths doore. Now ſee what muſt comfort this man. *If there bee a meſſenger, or an interpreter, one of a thouſand to declare vnto man his righteouſneſſe. Then will God haue mercie vppon him, and will ſaie, deliuer him, that hee goe not downe to the pitte, for I haue receiued a reconciliation. Then ſhall his fleſhe bee as freſh as a childes, and ſhall returne as in the dayes of his youth. Hee ſhall pray vnto God, and hee will bee fauourable vnto him, and hee ſhall ſee his face with ioye, &c.* Theſe are great things, and therefore *Iob* ſayth, that hee that ſhould do them muſt be a meſſenger, heo muſt bee ſent of god. hee muſt be an interpreter of the will of god, and a rare man, one of a thouſand: therefore a

Pſal. 47.

Iob. 33. 19.

20.

21.

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23.

24.

25.

26.

blind

blind reader is not sufficient for these things. The Eunuch was reading the prophet *Esay* by himselfe, but hee knew not what hee read vntill *Phillip* expounded it vnto him: and after that hee beleeued, he was baptized, and he went on his way reioycing. The Iaylour was in his desperate dumps, and but in a mad moode, when for feare hee went about to kill himselfe, but after *Paule* had preached vnto him the worde of the Lorde, he beleeued in Christ, and reioyced that he and his beleeued in God, for then he had the assurance of Gods fauour in Christ Iesus, which he had not before: to shew vs how necessary the preaching of the word is, for the working of this assurance. To this agreeth also the Apostle Saint *Paul*, for (saith he) *We being iustified by faith in Christ haue peace with God, but this fayth is wrought by hearing, and hearing by the preaching of the word of God.* All which doe teach vs, that if wee woulde haue the assurance of Gods louing fauour in our troubles, and on our death bed, wee must frequent the preaching of the word of God, not because God cannot worke faith without the meanes of preaching, but because in his singular wisedome and mercy, hee hath appointed this meanes, and promised a blessing to his own appointment, and to none else.

Act. 8. 28
31. 33
38. 39
Act. 16, 17.
30.
32.
34.
Rom. 5. 1.
Rom. 10.
11.
19.

This meanes being neglected, the com-

fort

fort is abated, and the assurance is hazarded, our faith is weakened, and the deuill aduantaged against vs. And this may appeare to be true, by the parable of the worldlings, which preferred their oxen, farmes, their ploughs, and their families, before the feast of the word; not denying it to bee good, but they had businesse to doe, and they could not intend it, and therefore in the ende were shut quite out from the feast of Gods louing fauour. This may further be seene in the confession of the Church and spouse of Christ, which *Salomon* hath recorded in his booke of Songs, in the fift Chapter, *My beloued* (saith the Church) *knocked and called, saying, Open vnto mee, my sister, my loue, my doue, my vndefiled. for my head is full of dewe, and my lockes with the droppes of the night:* meaning that he daunced long attendance vppon her, as one that standeth knocking without the doores all night; but see what colde entertainement shee gaue him, *I haue putte off my coate, howe shall I put it on? I haue washed my feete, howe shall I defile them?* her meaning is, shee was in bedde at her ease, and was loth to rise to let him in, a litt'e thing stayeth her, from rising, but what gat shee by her sluggish delayes? Afterwarde shee arose, and opened the doore, *but her welbeloued was gone and past, shee sought him, but coulde not*

The neglect of the meanes what it doth.
The second sort.
Cant. 5. 2
Vers. 3.
Vers. 6

find him, shee called, but hee answered not. All this is to teach vs, that if wee woulde bee assured of Christ his loue, & saluation by him, wee must seeke it betimes without delay, while it is offered vnto vs, for although hee knocke now, yet wee know not whether he will call againe or no. And besides that, the more delayes wee make, the further are wee off from him, and the more vnfitte are we to receiue the worde hereafter: for when Sathan hath so farre preuailed with men, that he can bring them to a custome in sinne, in negligence, in slothfulnesse, or in any thing else; what followeth, but hardnesse of heart? and what followeth hardnesse of heart, but impenitencie? as the apostle teacheth the Romanes: this woulde be considered of all, but especially of those men, which haue so many lets and hinderances, that they cannot finde any time for the hearing of the word of God. Thus you see that they, which prolong the time thus of hearing the word preached, and yet thinke to haue the assurance of gods loue, they do but deceiue themselues.

Rom. 2. 4. 5.

The third sort.

But (I) misse neuer a Sermon saith one, I goe euerie day to the lecture. But deceiue not thy selfe, thou maiest for all that bee as farre from hauing that sweete assurance of Gods loue in Iesus Christ, as hee that heareth it neuer a day, except thou come both

with

with reuerence and humblenesse of spirite, like a yong childe, tractable, teachable, and willing to be reformed, for the Lord resisteth the proud, and giueth grace to the humble, and as hee filleth the hungrie with good things, so it is as certaine that hee sendeth the rich emptie away, although they come neuer so often. This you see that proud and prophane hearers do likewise deceiue themselues. 1. Pet. 5. 5 Luke. 1. 53.

Let the preacher say what hee will (say some) we will neuer beleeue him, but doe as wee thinke good, wel be it so, and know this withall, that as a sicke bodie which saith to the Phisition, prescribe mee what you will I will take what I list, hee shall perish for all his Phisition: so you which say, say what you will; we will do as wee list, &c. You shal surely perish, and goe to the deuill, for all your hearing, without speedy repentance. For *whosoeuer beleeueth, passeth from death to life, but whosoeuer beleeueth not, is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth vpon him* (saith *S. Iohn*) and thus you see how vnbeleeuers deceiue themselues of this assurance and euidence. A fourth sort. Iohn. 3. 18 & 5. 24.

I woulde heare the Sermon (sayth another) but hee speakes no Latin, nor Greeke, nor authours, &c. Alas poore soule, if thou wert condemned to die thou wouldest be glad A fifth sort.

to see and heare thy pardon in plaine English, and after the plainest manner that can be without anie tales of Robinhood, or Philosophie, or Poetrie, or anie other authours, but thy Princes hande to it; but God must send thee thy pardon, and must set it forth after thy fashion forsooth, & not after his own manner, that is too base for thee, or else thou wilt none of it, as though God were bound, not onely to saue thee, which wert a condemned and a wretched creature, but to feede thy eares too (forsooth) with fine speeches.

Note.

Aske these wise men how their deedes and euidences, and obligations are made, or how they woulde haue them made, and they will say, make them after the plainest manner that can bee, they care not in howe plaine tearmes and words they be, so that they may be therby assured of their money, houses, and landes. Now the word of God containeth in it the euidence of the faithfull, which they haue to shewe for heauen, and this euidence is Gods promise, and Gods children care not how plainely Gods promises bee set downe vnto them, so that they may bee assured of Gods louing fauour towardes them in the Lord Iesus.

The first sort.

I would heare the Sermon (sayth another) but I woulde heare comfortable things, I loue not to heare of my sinnes, and of Gods

iudgements

iudgements, that is a terrible thing: see how cunning men are nowadayes to cousin their soules, as though forsooth God would grant thee the assurance of his fauour, thou dwelling still in thy sinnes, or as though thou couldest know howe to be discharged by the Gospell, vntill thou didst know wherewith the law hath charged thee. No no: there can be no healing in this case, without a deepe launching; no, nor any going to heauen, but the high way is to goe by hell, and to passe along by the fearefull sight of thy sinnes, and Gods vengeance due for them, and then shalt thou see how much beholding to the Lorde thou art for his louing kindnesse and fauour towards thee in Christ Iesus, by whose stripes hee hath healed thee.

We haue a good churchman (saith another) and a faire reader, and hee can tell a good smooth tale in the Pulpit too for a neede. A seuenth sort.

All this may bee true, and yet both thou & hee still farre inough from the assurance of Gods fauour through a liuely faith: for the deuils can speake scripture, and may speake a great while of Scripture too, before thou by their speaking shalt be assured of Gods fauor. And so it is with them whom God neuer sent with message of comfort vnto thee, Ier. 23. 32. for *they runne and runne saith the Lorde: but I neuer sent them, and therefore bring they no*

good vnto my people, if no good, the what assurance can you haue by their ministerie, who are not sent of God, but intrude themselues for filthie gaine, or vaine glory?

Thus you see how many men deceiue themselues in abusing the ordinarie meanes of the worde, and yet thinke to be made as sure of Gods fauour as anie man in the worlde. To his worde the Lorde hath annexed and ioyned the administration of his Sacraments in his Church, as an outward meanes likewise, whereby wee are more confirmed and strengthened in the assurance of his fauour, to these two outward meanes he putteth the inwarde worke of his spirite; without the which, the other are to no effect: then on our partes is required a liuely faith in Christ Iesus, the purchaser of this fauour and loue of his father for vs, and this faith although it hath his beginning and encreasing, his weakening and strengthning in this life, and her perfection in the world to come, yet is it not idle, but working, nor naked, but clothed with good workes the fruites of faith so soone as it is begotten: to this iustifying faith is alwayes ioyned the sanctifying spirite, which worketh by loue, and is continually occupied in purifying the heart, for Christ Iesus, and in applying of Iesus Christ vnto the heart of the owner. And thus haue

Sacraments.

Spirite.

1. Pet. 1. 5.
Gal. 5. 6.
Act. 15. 9.

you

you heard both by what meanes the Lorde doth conuay the assurance of his louing fauor vnto his children in affliction, and also howe we are to vse the same meanes.

Let vs then diligently and carefully vse these meanes, and then shall we be effectually assured of Gods loue and fauour in Christ Iesus, and being once assured of that, we may boldly cast downe the gantlet, and bid defiance to hell, and all the deuils in hell, and make that chalenge which the Apostle *Paul* doth make in the behalfe of all Gods children, *Who shall separate vs from the loue of Christ? shall tribulation or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakednesse, or perill, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake are we killed, all the day long, wee are counted as sheepe for the slaughter. Neuertheless in all these things wee are more then conquerours through him that loued vs. For I am perswaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angelles, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor anie other creature shall bee able to separate vs from the loue of GOD, which is in Christ Iesus our Lorde.* To this Iesus Christ which hath so dearely purchased this fauour for vs, to the Father of our Lorde Iesus Christ, which hath so freely bestowed such fauour vppon vs, and to this holy spirite,

Rom. 8. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39.

which so comfortably assureth vs of this fauour, three persons, and one eternall God, be all praise and glorie for euer, *Amen*.

THE THIRD SERMON, Nouember 28. 2. Sabboth.

And as for mee, thou vpholdest mee in mine integritie, and doest set mee before thy face for euer.

THe Prophet *Dauid* by two sorts of arguments assureth himselfe, that Gods fauour belongeth vnto him, the first is drawen from his outwarde estate in respect of the world, which was verie good: in as much as his ennemies did not triumph ouer him. The second ariseth from a view of his owne inwarde estate, in respect of God, which was much better, for that the Lorde vphelde him in his vprightnesse, and had a continuall care both of his soule and bodie. The

first argument of Gods fauour is strong: but being ioyned to the second it is sure. The first is great, but because it is a generall thing, and may bee giuen to the vngodly to ouercome his ennemies (I meane the enemies of his body) therefore *Dauid* resteth not in that, but searcheth within himself, to see if he can finde any inwarde tokens of Gods fauour: and searching, hee findeth two within himselfe, the first was Gods hand vpholding him from falling away from his God: the second was Gods eye alwayes vpon him for his safetie. And hauing found these at home in himselfe, he triumpheth, and blessed God the giuer.

So that nowe the King sheweth what inward tokens he had receiued of Gods fauour, for God doth more for his children then for the wicked, he speakes comfortable things to the soules of his people. *Ioseph* loued all his brethren, but *Beniamin* hee loued with a more speciall loue, and therefore he gaue messes of meate to them all, but *Beniamins* messe was fiue times as much as the rest, so God giueth libertie to all his creatures as a good and a louing God, insomuch that the earth is full of his mercies, but his loue to his elect children by Christ, is a thousand times more then the rest, for them hee vpholdeth in their integritie, *and doth sette them before*

Verseme.

Gen. 43. vlt.

Psal. 104. 28

before his face for euer. Gods loue is more to men then to beasts: of men, his fauour is more to his Church, then to all the worlde besides, for hee loueth the gates of *Zion* more
Psal.87.2. then all the dwellings of *Iacob*, he hath chosen that for his resting place, hee hath a delight in that; there brake hee the bow and
Psal.132.13 knapped the speare in peeces, hee burnt the
Psal.76.1.2.3 chariots with fire, yea he wounded enē kings in the day of his wrath for *Zions* sake, that is, for the loue that hee bare towards his chosen people. Againe, in this visible Church hee fauoureth his elect more then the rest, and his louing fauour to themward is greater then to all the world besides, for Gods Church is like a noble mans house, wherein are vesselles of
2.Tim.2.20. golde and vessels of earth, and his vesselles of gold are set vp safely, and kept more daintily vnder locke and key then the other. *Sing vnto the Lorde* (saith *Dauid*) *sing vppon the harpe*
Psal.147.7,8. *vnto our God, which couereth the heauen with cloudes, and prepareth raine for the earth, and maketh the grasse to growe vpon the mountaines: Which giueth the beastes their foode, and to the young rauens that cric.* Thus much hee doth for all his creatures, but as for his seruants which feare him, & attend vpon his mercies, he delighteth in them and takes great pleasure in them: such pleasure he taketh not in the strength of an horse, nor in the legges or

stature

ſtature of a man. From all the creatures in generall, he deſcendeth to the Church in particular and ſaith, *Prayſe the Lorde O Ieruſalem, prayſe thy God O Zion. For he hath made the barres of thy gates ſtrong, and hath bleſſed thy children within thee. Hee ſetteth peace in thy borders, and ſatisfieth thee with the flower of wheate.* But hath hee done no more for his Church then ſo? Yes that he hath; *Hee ſheweth his word vnto Iacob, his ſtatutes and his iudgements vnto Iſrael: Hee hath not dealt ſo with eury nation, neither haue they knowledge of his iudgements.* 12. 13. 14. 19. 20.

In the firſt of *Canticles*, the Church deſireth to be kiſſed with the kiſſes of Chriſts mouth, that is, to haue more teſtimonies and tokens of his loue then one, or of one kinde, for by outwarde things (ſayth the wiſeman) *a man cannot know loue and hatred*, becauſe all things come alike to all. Therefore ſayth the Church vnto her ſpouſe, *kiſſe mee with the kiſſes of thy mouth, for thy loue is ſweeter then wine*; that is, let mee haue a continuance of thy fauour towardes mee, and many ſure tokens thereof, for no pleaſure or profit is comparable to thy loue. The kiſſes of Chriſt are his bleſsings beſtowed vpon his Church, his bleſsings are either temporal or eternall, corporall or ſpirituall. His ſpirituall bleſſings are of two ſorts, either outwarde or inward. Eccl. 9. 1. Cant. 1. 1.

inwarde. His outward, yet ſpirituall bleſſings, whereby hee witneſſeth his loue to his Church, they are the preaching of his word, and the adminiſtration of the Sacraments; theſe be great benefites, and ſweete kiſſes of the Lord our God: but becauſe theſe are common to the hypocrite, which is cloſe and craftie in heart, as well as to the faithfull whoſe heart is vpright before the Lord, wee are not to reſt in theſe outward things, but to ſearch and neuer leaue ſearching, vntill wee finde out the inward kiſſes of Chriſt Ieſus, which are moſt ſure teſtimonies of his loue indeed. And thoſe are faith in Chriſt Ieſus, repentance vnfained for ſinne, patience in affliction, ioy in the holy ghoſt, and all the other fruits of the ſanctifying ſpirite, whereof wee may reade more in *Gal.* 5. Euerie one cannot ſhew theſe, but onely he, which hath the ſpirite of ſanctification, *Saul* had the ſpirit, that is, ſome giftes of the ſpirite, and yet was reiected, but *Dauid* had the ſanctifying ſpirite, and therefore was not reiected of the Lord, neither did hee reiect the Lorde, but by this was ſure of Gods fauour to his ſoule. If *Dauid* had beene a king, a conquerer, a man of wiſedome, of pollicie, of learning, and of riches; and in all theſe vncomparable, and had loſt his integritie, he had loſt his marke of Gods loue, and might haue followed *Saul* well

Gal. 5. 22

inough

inough. So if we were rich, wiſe, and learned if wee were Preachers, Biſhops, Prelates, Lordes, Earles, Dukes and Emperours, and haue loſt our ſinceritie, our zeale our loue, our faith, our religiouſneſſe, our godlyneſſe, a good conſcience; wee haue loſt our markes too, and may follow *Saul* too wel inough for all our outward pompe and glory. On the other ſide, if one haue enemies, or be in pouertie, diſgrace, impriſonment, out of credit with the worlde, out of liuing, &c. and keepe a ſincere heart, and a good conſcience in all theſe things, hee may ſay, and ſing too with *Simeon*, *Lorde nowe letteſt thou thy ſeruaunt departe in peace*, if his time be come. They which haue the outwarde kiſſes, and not the inwarde aſſurances, are like *Eſau* with his pottage, but without his birthright. But they which haue loſt all, but keepe ſtill their integritie, are like *Iacob*, who loſt his pottage, and found the inheritance, and the loue of God: for God loued *Iacob*, but hated *Eſau*. *Many will ſay* (ſaith the Prophet) *who will ſhew vs any good?* that is, any worldly good, *but Lorde lift thou vppe the light of thy countenance vppon vs, and then I ſhall haue more ioy of heart, then they that haue their corne, and wine, and oyle increaſed.* So nowe adayes many ſeeke for gods loue in the comuion traſh of the world, and they run about

Gen. 25. 30

Rom. 9. 13.
Pſal. 4. 6.

the

the worlde by ſea, and by land crying, Who will ſhew vs anie credit, any worſhippe, any riches, any offices, any promotions, &c. And ſome of the miniſterie crie, Who will ſhew vs any moe liuings, any Deaneries, any Biſhoprickes, any ſpirituall promotions, yea and this is the voyce of gaping Courtiers too by report: and if they ſpeede of theſe and ſuch things, then they are ſure (as they think) that God loueth them, as *Achab* thought himſelfe well if hee might obtaine *Naboths* vineyard: but many times it falleth out, that as *Dinah* while ſhe wandred to ſee faſhions, and thought to feede her fancie vppon the daughters of a ſtrange countrey, ſhee loſt her viginitie amongſt the ſonnes of the country. So ſome men while they ſeeke to feede and fil their greedie worme of couetouſneſſe and ambition with diuers pleaſures and profits of the world, and looſe their ſinceritie amongſt them, and make ſhipwracke of faith and a good conſcience. And then they go away out of their houſes, as *Thamar* went out of her brother *Amnons* chamber, with her maidens garment of diuers colours rent, becauſe ſhee was enforced to leaue her maidenhead behind her. So theſe worldlings which ſometime with *Demas* followed *Paule*, but nowe with *Demas* embrace the preſent worlde, are enforced to goe away with their garment of

1. Tim. 1. 19.

2. Sam. 13. 18.

diuers

diuers colours rent and torne: for while they will venter through the bushes and thornes of worldly cares, to get worldly promotion, is it not a miracle if they come out with their zeale not quenched, their courage not abated, their faith not blasted, their loue not cooled, their knowledge not withered, their humilitie not defaced, their sinceritie not decreased, and the whole garment of pietie and religion not scratched, torne, and rent in peeces? And then a man may say to them as *Absalon* said to his sister, *Hath thy brother mette with thee?* so, hath not the world met with them? And no maruell, for if *Sisera* looke for anie rest, or refreshing in *Iaels* tent, hee shall surely be made naile-fast. So if any will seeke for infallible markes of Gods fauour in Sathans tents, and in the worldes tents, or in pleasures tents, or in profites tents, a thousand to one but their sincerltie and godlinesse will bee naile-fast before they come out againe. What wise man will seeke for grapes vpon thornes? or figs vpon thistles? or for gold amongst old iron? or heny out of a spider? or heate in the Ise? So no wise harted christian will looke for certain marks of the Lordes fauour, in such things as may bee markes of his wrath, as well as of his loue. But if these outwarde and generall graces bee offred them, they take them; and if they

Verse 28.

Iudg. 4. 21.

they go from them, they go not after them to loose their sinceritie for them, but thus they resolue with themselues: O Lord my God, I see, that by no outwarde thing a man can certainely tell whether hee bee in thy fauour or no: but if thou vpholdest me in mine integritie, and in the studie of pietie, and in true zeale of thy glorie, &c. then I shall be sure of thy fauour indeed: therfore O Lord, if want come, then keepe my faith in thy prouidence firme and strong, if thou sendest enemies to trie me, keepe my loue sound, if thou sendest sickneſſe or aduersitie, keepe my patience entire, if riches and preferment come, keepe my zeale vnquenchable, like *Lot*, who when it was not granted him to abide still in great Sodome, requested that he might go to little Zoar. And then, although they haue nothing else but the inwarde testimonie of gods spirit, they haue inough: for by these inward kisses they are sure of gods fauour, because a good conscience is a continual feast to the afflicted, & makes merrie at home in the house of the inward man, when there is nothing but warre and trouble abroad.

Gen. 19. 20, 22.

Pro. 15. 15.

As for me thou vpholdest me in mine integritie.

This same integritie is like *Noahs* arke, wherein hee was preserued when others perished

riſhed being without it: it is like the redde thrid, which the ſpies of *Ioſhua* gaue to *Rahab*, it was as a charter whereby ſhe claimed her life when the reſt were deſtroyed which had not the like. So is this integritie, of ſmal reckoning (I confeſſe) with the men of this worlde, which thinke that there is no other heauen but earth: but as *Rahabs* thrid was better to her then al her goods and ſubſtance when the ſworde came: ſo this is better to Gods children then al the world, when death come. If they haue this within, they care not, nay they need not care what can come without. If Sathans buffetting come, this is a helmet of proofe, if Sathans dartes flie out, this is a ſhield to quench them, if floudes of croſſes come to carry vs away, this is a boate to beare vs vp: if all the worlde caſt mire and filth in our faces, wee are neuer a whit the more deformed, but ſtill beautiful for al that, for the kings daughter (ſaith *Salomon*) that is, the Church of Chriſt, is all glorious within. Pſal. 45. 13.

In mine integritie. What ſhoulde *Dauid* meane by his integritie? that hee is without ſinne? no, not ſo, for hee ſaith in another place, *in ſin he was conceiued, and in iniquitie was he borne*, and in another place hee ſaith, that he could not number his ſinnes, & therfore he praieth vnto God, to keepe him from preſumptuous ſinnes, and to cleanſe him from Pſal. 51. 5. Pſal. 19. 12. 13.

his secret faults, therefore that is not his meaning, neither can it be his meaning, because he speaketh by the spirite of God, which in diuers other places doth tell vs, that no man is without sin. *Who can say my heart is cleane*, saith one? And *whosoeuer saith he hath no sinne deceiueth himselfe, and there is no trueth in him*, saith another: and therefore that cannot bee his meaning, and if he shoulde say so, wee are not to beleeue him in this point. But when *Dauid* speakes of his integritie, and vprightnesse, or innocencie, hee meaneth that hee is guiltlesse, and free from that which his enemies did most maliciously charge him withall; so that it hath alwaies respect or relation vnto some particular matter, wherewith hee is charged by men, or to something that is in controuersie betweene him and his aduersaries. As in the 7 Psalme the 3 verse. *O Lord, if I haue done this thing, if there be any wickednesse in my handes*; that is, if it be true that I am accused of, &c. if euer I were guiltie of seeking *Sauls* hurt, with which some did charge me, *Iudge me O Lord, according to my righteousnesse, and according to mine integritie that is in me.*

Iere. 17. 9
1. Ioh. 1. 8

What is meant by integritie.

Psal. 7. 3

Heere in this our text, it signifieth two things. First that there was no cause in the world, why his enemies shoulde triumph against him: for the Lord had kept him free

from

from that, which they accused him of. Secondly, it importeth that his heart and affections were still sound, and not mooued to seek reuenge vpon them, although they had giuen him great and iust occasion so to doe.

If we take it the first way, wee may verie well: for it is a speciall token of Gods fauour, and a notable meanes of comfort, when the Lord doth keepe vs free from the vniust accusations of the worlde, or when we are not guiltie of those thinges, which the wicked may at any time charge vpon vs: and the doctrine is this. That the best way to stay vs in time of trouble, & to keep our patiẽce inuiolable, is to look in for a good conscience, and see that wee be falsly accused, which if wee finde, then al goeth well, and wee are merry at home, howsoeuer the world shal say or do abroad: for still I say with *Salomon*, that a good conscience is a continuall feast.

Oh if it were true (thou saiest) it woulde neuer greeue thee, nay then it may iustly greeue thee, if it were true, which is reported against thee. Wilt thou bee greeued to bee blessed? then be not vexed and mooued out of order, when thou art slaundered; for *blessed are ye when men reuile you, & persecute you and speake all manner of euill saying against you falsely for my sake*, sayth our Sauiour Christ. Oh this is a speciall fauour of Math. 5. 11

God, when wee can without checke of conſcience appeale to God in our owne heartes, and ſay, *Thou O Lord knoweſt my innocencie in this poinct.* But thy ſpirite (boyling ſtill in a deſire of reuenge) wil ſay, oh but it is good to teach ſuch a one, to vſe his tongue better another time. Indeed in ſome caſes it is good ſo to doe, as when a mans publicke miniſtery, or the Magiſtrates gouernment is by his meanes defaced, but there is no cauſe for thee to be ſo out of quiet, or to rage & ſtorm as thou doeſt: defēd thy good name in a good and chriſtian ſort, and bee thankfull to thy God, which hath kept thee from that offence, that thou maieſt ſay as *Dauid* ſaid. *As for me thou vpholdeſt me in mine integritie.* If we take integritie for a ſound heart, free frō reuenge, it miniſtreth no ſmal profite, and inſtruction, for the king although his enemies had ſo vexed him, and had throwne ſo manie ſlaunderous reportes, & reprochful ſpeeches againſt him, yea all their trecheries and conſpiracies notwithſtanding, yet hee thanketh God for that he did not ſeeke to reuenge againe, but reioyceth that the Lord kept him in the ſoundneſſe and vprightneſſe of his heart.

A notable bleſsing of God, and a ſure token of his fauour vnto vs; whenſoeuer wee ſhalbe afflicted, or any way moleſted; if we finde

finde our heartes ſound, and our affections to be ſetled within vs: if we can ſay, Lord, lay what croſſe thou pleaſeſt vpon me, let men ſpeak their pleaſures of me, and inuent what lies they can, let them call me by what names they will, and iudge me at their pleaſure, ſo that thou keepe my heart ſound I care not, for if I haue all the goodes in the world, and not the integritie of my heart, I am but in a mad caſe. And therefore O Lord, my God, if thou wilt needes raiſe vp enemies againſt me, yet O Lord, graunt that my heart may be entire, ſound, and vpright; and then raiſe vp what enemies thou wilt. Then I ſhall be ſure to ſpeake nothing proudly, nothing vainglorioufly, nothing impatiently, nothing vncharitably, nothing diſtruſtfully, and nothing againſt thy glory: for if I ſhould do ſo, alas what ſhoulde I get by it? I were then as deepe in ſinne as they. No Lord, I am content to referre the whole matter to thee: for although I am falſly charged in this, yet it is thy goodneſſe and fauour, which did vphold mee, for if thou hadſt let mee go after my owne will, then I hadde been guiltie indeede. And although in this I be innocent, yet I knowe my ſelfe to be guiltie of manie thinges as vile as this, which they knowe not of: and that is alſo of thy mercy and goodneſſe towardes me poore wretched creature.

A good meditation.

Note.

And as for them thou haſt ſet them a worke to trie mee, it is thy doing O Lord, though they haue no ſuch purpoſe, neither knowe they ſo much, yet by thy grace, I am ſo perſwaded, and if thou didſt not keep me from falling, I ſhould be as wicked as they are. If wee woulde but enter into this meditation with our ſelues as in the ſight of God, then ſhould wee put vp many thinges more then we doe, and not vexe one another, yea eat vp one another at law as we doe. Neither would we do ſo I am perſwaded if we did throughly vnderſtand the pollicies and ſleightes of Sathan, for hee is very buſie to raiſe vp enemies againſt vs, and then he is as buſie to ſtir vs vp to reuengement: what? wilt thou put vp this at his hands? &c. then hath he that he would haue, for while he ſets vs one to hunt another, in the meane time he huntes vs all, and therefore let vs pray to God to keep our heartes ſound and vpright.

If wee did but conſider on the other ſide, what daunger our ennemie is fallen into by vexing of vs, when wee giue him no cauſe, we would be ſo farre from reuenging, that wee woulde rather pittie him and lament him, and praie for him, as our Sauiour Chriſt did for his enemies, *Father forgiue them, they know not what they doe.* And as *Stewen* did for his, *Lord lay not this ſinne*

Luke 23.34

Act. 7.60

to

to their charge. For well may *Alexander* the Copper-ſmith do *Paul* much hurt, but the Lord will rewarde him according to his works. And the ſame God will no doubt ſee our cauſes redreſſed in his good time. 2. Tim. 4. 14

And if it doe come to this point that we be afflicted or wrōged any maner of way whatſoeuer: the laſt remedie is to ſay, Lord if I muſt needes be thus handled, or if thou wilt needes take away my goodes, &c. *Thy will be done.* Onely keepe my heart vpright before thee, and put my affections in order, & giue me grace that I may be content and put it to thee O Lord, for I hadde rather haue all the world againſt mee then to haue thee againſt me: ſo long as thou loueſt me, I care not who hate me.

Oh, but if I ſhould follow this counſell, thou wilt ſay, then my enemy will laugh & reioyce, and inſult ouer mee, I will neuer beare that. No, I warrant thee, and if he doth laugh at thee, it is but frō the teeth outward: for ſaith *Salomon* to the wicked, *there is ſorrow euen in laughter*, hee will not tell thee what is within him, if thou didſt, or couldeſt ſee into him, thou ſhouldeſt ſee that, that would make thee to pity him, and euen ſhed teares for him. Wee cannot be better reuenged of our enemies, then to let them ſee how little they preuaile againſt vs, and how little Prou. 14. 13

they mooue our patience. For as there is no such griefe to a iester or a iugler, as when he doth see that with all his iestes and fooleries he cannot moue mirth, nor change the countenaunces of them that heare him, and see him: so there can be no greater torment to a wicked and a malitious enemy, then to see thee no whit greeued, nor mooued at his malice against thee, but that thou do so beare his iniuries as if there were none at all, for thy aduersaries purpose is to anger thee, & to driue thee into thy dumpes, which if he cannot bring to passe, then is hee chafed and vexed ten times more then hee was before.
Rom.12.21. Therefore saith the Apostle, *Let vs not be ouercome with euill, but ouercome euil with goodnesse*, to teache vs that good is stronger then euill: and what is it that we desire, but to ouercome our enemies or rather the euill that is in them? then wee must doe it with that which is contrary to their euill, and that is goodnesse, as fire is quenched not with fire but with water. If then thy enemy be vainglorious be not thou so too, but be lowly giuing glory to God, if hee be puffed vp with pride, be thou of an humble spirit, if he boast himselfe, abase thou thy selfe: if hee curse, blesse thou, if he be hoate, be thou cold, if he blaspheme, do not thou so, but reprooue him in good wordes, and if hee be mad, be thou staied,

taied, & ſo doing thou ſhalt in the end both wearie him, and ſtay him too. And when they ſee this, it will cutte their very heart ſtrings aſunder, and then thanke thou God for that *he hath vpholden thee in thine integritie*. For Sathan whom they ſerue, hath not ſuch a ſpite to our wealth, our learning, or our cunning, or credite (though he loue none of all) as he hath to our godlineſſe, and the graces of Gods ſpirit in vs. Was it *Iobs* wealth that Sathan ſo much enuied? or did he ſo ſift him as he did, becauſe he was a rich man? nothing greeued the diuell ſo much, as to ſee *Iob* ſtill continue in his vprightneſſe, & when he made him blaſpheme and curſe the day of his birth, then he left him: for he careth not greatly how rich men be, ſo that it be not in godlines, nay he will help them to gather riches & learning, and credit, &c. if he ſee that therewithall they may gather more ſinne, and he may gather them to hell: as hee was content, yea and ready to make *Adam* eate one apple more, when he had inough before, becauſe he knew not els how to ſet God and him at enimitie, which were before at vnitie. Nowe when Sathan ſhall thus ſift vs, as no doubt he doth, and will ſift vs as wheate is ſifted (ſaith Chriſt) let vs then looke to our faith, and pray that it may not faile: then ſhal he and his inſtrumentes haue their labour for

Iob. 1. 1. 8

Iob. 2. 3. 4

Gen. 3. 3

Luke 22. 31

their

their trauell, when wee ſhall haue the aſſurance of Gods fauour *he vpholding vs in our integritie*, which God graunt for his mercie ſake. The Papiſts taught men to know whether they ſtoode in the ſtate of grace or no, by many toyes and deuiſes, as by going on pilgrimage hither and thither, by offering to this ſtocke and to that blocke, by going to ſhrift, , and by taking abſolution at a balde prieſtes hand, by ſaying their ſtint of Mattens and beads, by keeping of their daies and houres, and a number of ſuch odde deuiſes: but they were all deceiued, becauſe this was of the deuils inuenting, for indeede by theſe things men were ſure of the diuels fauor, but not of Gods grace. But if wee would knowe whether we ſtand in the ſtate of grace or no indeede. here is a triall, if we find Gods ſpirite by the preaching of the goſpel ſubduing the corruptions of our harts, ſetling our faith in gods promiſes, through Chriſt Ieſus, and vpholding vs in our integritie, when by courſe of nature wee ſhould fall into iniquity: then be we in the ſtate of grace indeede, for thus did *Dauid* aſſure himſelfe of gods fauour: and ſo may we, if we will watch our ſelues as *Dauid* did.

THE

THE FOVRTH SERMON.

December the 5. Sab. the 3.

As for me thou vpholdest me, &c.

IN these words we are to note further, that the king doeth not say simply, I am vpholden, or I haue kept mine integritie, but he saieth, thou O Lord hast vpholden mee, and dost vphold me: where we may obserue, that though *Dauids* heart was sincere, and sound, and vpright before God, free from his enemies vniust accusations, and free from all desire of reuenge: yet all this was giuen him of god, it came not to him by nature, to teach vs that of our selues we are not able to keepe our selues, but god must and doth vphold vs in our vprightnesse, or else we fall as others do, and therefore wee must craue this grace of god, that he wil keep vs, and defend vs with his holy spirit.

There hath beene a great controuersie betweene the Papists and vs (euer since the abomi-

bomination of desolation stoode in the holy place) about this point. They (intending to iustifie themselues with the Lawyer in the gospel) say, This haue we done, and that can we do, affirming that it is in the power of man (which is but dust and ashes) of himselfe, and by himselfe, to repent when he wil, to beleeue when he will, to obey God when he will, and to vpholde themselues in their integritie. And to make their matter good, they say, we haue the grace of God giuen vs, to obtaine the grace of God by our own power. Where you see they speake flat contraries, if they had grace to see it: for if the grace of God be giuen vs, then wee haue it not of our selues: if we haue it of our selues, then is it not giuen vs of God. Againe, if we be vpholden by the grace and fauor of God, then we vpholde not our selues: if wee haue this power of our selues, then not of God. Thus they speake contrary to themselues, and are diuided in their owne speeches, like the kingdome of Sathan, which is diuided in it selfe that it can not stand. And to speake the truth, they speake confusedly they know not what, because Babel, that is confusion, is fallen vpon them, as vpon those men which woulde presume by their owne indeuours without God to climbe vp into heauen.

Now on the other side, we hold, that wee

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can get nothing but by the help of God: and we admit no first grace, but if the grace of God be in vs, it is giuen vs of Gods spirite, not gotten of our owne power, and this wee prooue by the worde of God; *God worketh both the will and the deede*, saith the Apostle to the Philippians chap. 2. verse 13. *Of our selues we are not able to thinke a good thought*, saieth the same Apostle to the Corinthians, and therefore hee demaundeth of all flesh, *What hast thou that thou hast not receiued?* as if he should say, nothing: If therefore thou hast receiued it, why doest thou boast as though thou hadst not receiued it? Aske *saint Iames*, and he will tell thee, that *euery good gift, and euery perfect gift, is from aboue, and commeth downe from the Father of light*. As if hee should say, from whomsoeuer euil commeth, yet all goodnesse commeth from God. Aske *Abimelech*, Genes. 20. and hee will tell you, that if God had not kept him, he had kept *Abrahams* wife. Aske *Peters* fall, and that will tell vs, that if we stand by our selues, we shall fall, although we were as strong as *Peter*. Aske *Ieremy*, and hee will tell vs, that the heart is deceitfull, and wicked aboue all things: yea and though it be borne and bred, and brought vp with vs, and wee haue daily familiaritie therewith, yet we can not know it: therefore, if none can know it, much lesse

can

can any reforme it. Hee that knoweth it can reforme it, and doth reforme it, where it is reformed: but that is the Lord which searcheth the heart, for so it followeth in the next verse, *I the Lord search the heart, and trie the reines*. Aske *Moses*, and he wil tell vs, that the thoughts of mans heart are euil continually, as if he should say. If they be good at any time, that is not of man, but of God. *Moses* himselfe being in prayer, must haue his hands holden vp by *Aaron* & *Hur*. If *Moses* were not able of himselfe to holde vp his handes in prayer, much lesse was he able to holde vp his heart in prayer. What doeth this teach vs but this, that if we were as zealous as was *Moses*, yet God must holde vs vp, or else we faint?

Ier. 17. 9, 10. Genes. 6. 5.

There are but two things required of euery one. The first is to become holy. The second is, to continue holy, to conuert and turne into the wayes of God, and to continue in the wayes of the Lorde: nowe both these are of God, and not of our selues. Of the first the prophet Ioel speaketh when he saith, *Turne thou vs O Lord, and then we shall be turned*. As if he should say, Except the Lord doe turne our hearts, we shall neuer be turned vnto him, for of our selues wee cannot. Howe farre and howe long had saint *Paule* walked in the way of persecuting the Christians, if the Lord had not stayed him by the

Ioel 2.

way?

way? When would *Saul* haue become a *Paul*, if the Lord had not changed his name and altered his nature? When would so naturall a persecuter haue become so holy a professor, if the Lord had not called him? And when he was conuerted, who kept him from falling backe againe? *My grace* (saieth the Lorde) *is sufficient to vpholde thee*. The spirite of the Lord is therefore called by the prophet *Esay*, *the spirite of wisedome and vnderstanding, the spirite of counsell, the spirite of courage, the spirite of knowledge, and the spirit of the feare of the Lorde*: to teach vs, that if we haue holy wisedome, vnderstanding, or counsell, or courage, or knowledge, or the feare of God, wee haue them of Gods spirite, and not of our selues. When God gaue *Saul* a princely spirite, hee spake like a King, but when his spirite was departed from him, hee spake like a clowne, and not like a king. Therefore in the first of the Kings chapter 3. *Salomon* prayeth vnto God for a wise and vnderstanding heart, to teach vs, that we haue no such thing of our selues but from aboue. The very phrase of the scripture, and *Dauids* maner of speaking doth teach vs no lesse, *Thou vpholdest me* (saith *Dauid*) yea euen me, *thou vpholdest*. Now *Dauid* we knowe had many singular and excellent graces of god, and yet God must vphold him, that is, holde him vp

2. Cor. 12. 9.
Esay 11. 2.

from

from falling: what doth this argue but thus much, that we are subiect to falling euen the best of vs? Therefore in the 15 of *Iohn*, God is compared to a husbandman: and in the 5 of *Esay* 1. verse, and in diuers other places of Scripture his Church is compared to a vine, which though it bee most fruitfull, yet is it most weake, & must be purged by the Lord, that it may be fruitfull, and must bee vpholden by the Lord, or els it will fall to the ground. This doctrine hath a double vse for our selues. First it serueth for our comfort, if we be the seruants of God, for albeit wee be compassed about with many weaknesses, and assaulted with infinite temptations on euerie side, yet the Lord whom wee serue doth and will vphold vs. If at any time he doth let vs fall, it is to teach vs that wee cannot vpholde our selues, but that we stand by him. But assuredly though we fall dayly, yet hee will so vphold vs, if we relie vpon him, that we shall not fall finally from him.

Iohn 15.

Esay 5.1.

Iohn 15.

If hee take all his graces from vs (as wee thinke) at any time, let vs know that he doth it for no other purpose, but that wee might know our selues of our selues to bee but naked, and so might begge all of him againe. Therefore, whatsoeuer we want, let vs seeke it at the handes of God, that giueth to them which want: when we feele any weakenesse

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in vs, or any ſinne ſtrong, let vs beſeech the Lord, to vphold vs. Do not ſay, I can, or I wil do this, and that, I will beleeue, and repent when I liſt. No, for if the Lord by his grace and fauour doth not vphold thee, thou ſhalt doe nothing but fall from him. Faith is the gift of God, therefore pray, Lord increaſe my faith, and Lord help my vnbeliefe, A reformed heart, and holy affections be the gift of God, therefore pray with *Dauid*, *Create in me O Lord a cleane heart, and renew a right ſpirite within me.* The loue of wiſedome is the gift of God, therefore pray, *Apply my heart vnto wiſedome.* To vnderſtand the will of god in his law is the worke of god, therefore pray, O Lord *Open my eyes that I may ſee the wonderous things of thy law.* To ſet light by vanitie, that is, by vaine things & vaine perſons is the worke of gods grace, not of nature, therefore wee muſt pray, *Turne away my eies from beholding vanitie.* What ſhoulde I ſaie more? Let vs beſeech the Lord our ſtrength to vphold vs in our integritie, and hee will vphold vs, ſo farre as ſhal make for his owne glory, and our owne ſaluation, and what would we deſire more? And this wee muſt deſire: for elſe wee can not ſtand, but fall. Secondly, this doctrine ſerueth to humble vs, and may be a preſeruatiue againſt pride: the vſe of it is at all times, but chiefly when wee

Phil. 1.6.

Pſal. 51.

Pſal. 119.

Pſal. 119.

beginne to waxe prowde of any good thing which the Lord doth worke in vs, or by vs which indeede is our corrupt nature. And likewise when we insult ouer our weake brethren: both which are our faultes.

When such thoughtes and temptations come to fasten vpon vs, let vs thinke, that it is the Lord by whom we stand, and of him it is that wee are that which we are, and if wee be prowde thereof, he may and can take away our holde, and we shall fall, and our honour shall lie in the dust.

Rome was sometime a famous church, the beloued spouse of Christ Iesus, and a daughter of the most high, but for her pride, God let her fall, and hath now giuen her a bill of diuorcement.

Of England it may be saide, as it was saide of Ierusalem, our habitation and kinred is of Canaan, our father an Amorite, and our mother an Hittite. In our natiuitie our nauell was not cut, we were not softned with water, nor seasoned with salt, nor swadled with clowtes, no eie pitied our case, we were cast out into the open field to the contempt of our person. But the Lord of mercy and compassion passed by vs, and seeing vs euen polluted in our bloud, yea in our owne bloud, and in great pitie, and compassion vnspeakable, Thou shalt liue. He caused vs to multi-

Ezech. 16. 3, 4. 5, &c.

plie

plie as the bud of the field, he hath bestowed excellent ornaments vpon vs, our breasts are fashioned, our haire is growen, whereas wee were naked and bare. Beholde further, our time is as the time of loue, he hath spread his skirts ouer vs, and entered into a couenant with vs, and we are become his, and he is become ours. Hee hath washed vs with sweete water, and annointed vs with oile of gladnes. Hee hath clothed vs with broidered worke, he hath shod vs with badgers skins, and girded vs with fine linnen, and couered vs with silke. Hee hath decked vs with ornaments and put bracelets vpon our hands, & a chaine about our necke. He hath put a frontlet vpon our face, eare-rings in our eares, and a beautiful crowne vpon our head, he hath fed vs with fine flower, honie, and oyle, hee hath made vs very beautifull, and hath caused vs to grow vp to a kingdome, insomuch as our name is spread among the heathen for our beautie, which the Lorde hath sette vppon vs.

What should be saide more? In a word the Lorde hath counted nothing too costly, or too deare for vs, nay what could he do more for his vineyard that hee hath not done to it? but what of all this? shal we brag of our ornaments, and be prowd of our iewels? no: but let vs serue the Lord our God with feare, & Ephy. 5. Ezech. 16. 15, 16.

reioyce vnto him with reuerence, for if wee shall trust in our beautie, and play the harlot because of our renowne, if wee shall take our garments, and decke the high places with diuers colours, if we shall abuse the riches of Gods mercy, what then? Then heare the word of the Lord O harlot. Thus saieth
Ver. 35. the Lord, because thy shame is powred out, and thy filthinesse discouered through thy fornication with thy louers, I will therefore iudge thee after the manner of harlots, and murtherers, and I will giue thee the bloud of wrath and iealousie. I will giue thee into thy enemies handes, and they shall strippe thee out of all thy clothes, and thy faire iewelles, and leaue thee naked and bare. Therefore let him that thinkes he standeth, take heede lest he fall, but let vs make an end of our saluation with feare and trembling, not fearing
1. Cor. 10. lest wee shoulde fall from our election, and loose our saluation, but lest we fall from our integritie and loose our manifolde blessings, for want of sober vsing of them.

But this is in generall, let vs goe more particularly to worke. Haue any of vs here present, any knowledge more then he had, or more then others haue, or wisedome, zeale, or faith, or loue, or patience, or any grace, whatsoeuer, let vs not be proude of them, because God gaue them, and God can take

them

them againe. If any of vs doe ſtand vpright, and walke in honeſtie, when others doe fall, let vs not inſult ouer them, as the manner of ſome is, to vpbraide honeſter men then them ſelues by faults done fortie yeeres ſince, and the lawe fully ſatisfied for them, and yet this is the manner of prophane atheiſts, which knowe neither God nor themſelues, to caſt the olde ragges and ſores of the ſeruantes of god in their face, to make them and their profeſsion, I meane the goſpel odious in the eies of the worlde, and ſuch as themſelues are. And for no other cauſe but becauſe they wil not runne with them to the ſame exceſſe of riot: and euen as *Eſau* hated *Iacob* becauſe of the bleſsing wherewith god had bleſſed him, ſo do theſe men hate their brethren becauſe they are better then themſelues, and ſeeke to haue them and their wayes reformed according to the worde of God. Is it thinke you a ſmall matter thus to quench, or to grieue the ſpirit of god in any of our brethren? doe we ſtand by our ſelues? ſhall wee neuer fall? did we neuer fall our ſelues? what if the Lorde ſhall pull the ſtaffe of his grace from vs? then wee ſhall fall with ſhame enough, and then others ſhall inſult ouer vs, and reioyce at our falles, as we haue reioyced at their faultes. For further proofe whereof, let vs heare what the holie ghoſt ſaieth to

Note th

Geneſ.

such kind of persons in the 52. Psalme, *Why doest thou boast thy selfe in thy wickednesse, O man of power?* the louing kindenesse of God indureth daily, as if hee shoulde say, thou thinkest thy selfe a iolly fellow, and takest pride in thy wickednes, as though thou were a great man of power, and shouldest neuer come downe, and because God doeth suffer thee from day to day waiting for thy repentance, thou thinkest, either that he can not, or dare not, or that he will not meddle with thee: but now see thy selfe in thy colours, and then iudge what cause thou hast to bragge it out as thou doest against all the worlde what art thou? what goodnes is in thee? *Thy tongue imagineth mischiefe, and is like a sharpe rasor that cutteth deceitfully. Thou doest loue euill more then good, and lies more then trueth. Thou louest all wordes that may destroy, O deceitfull tongue.* Nowe see thy ende. *So GOD shall destroy thee for euer. Hee shall take thee and plucke thee out of thy Tabernacle, and roote thee out of the lande of the liuing. The righteous also shall see it, and feare, and shall laugh at him, saying: Beholde the man that tooke not God for his strength, but trusted vnto the multitude of his riches, and put his strength in his substance. But I* (saieth *Dauid*) *shall bee like a greene oliue tree in the house of God: for I trusted in the mercies of God for euer*

Psal. 52. 2, 3, &c.

and

and for euer. But some vvill say, this is spoken against the wicked sort of the world, but I haue more grace, and moe graces of God, then they haue: all the vvorld cannot detect me of such vices, therefore I may bee more bolde to speake my pleasure of others then they may. But deceiue not thy selfe: thou seest a childe, vvhile hee vvill runne vp and downe to shew his new cloths, he stumbleth euen vpon his clothes, and catcheth a fall, and seeing himselfe downe, and his clothes soiled in the dust, he crieth lovvder at his fall then he crowed before at his new coat: so god hath put many excellent graces vpon thee, thou crovvest at the sight of them, as *Nebuchadnezzar* did at the sight of his pallace, and like a foole thou art in admiration of thy selfe, til thou stumblest euen vpon thy owne gifts, & vvhen thou arte downe, thou vvhich before didst crow like a foole, doest then crie like a childe, especially because thou seest thy excellent graces, euen thy coat of diuers colors, stained and soiled vvith thy fal. Be not therfore proude of thy giftes, nor insolent ouer thy vveake brother: for god vpholdeth thee, & god can set him vp, and cast thee down: for promotion (saieth *Dauid*) commeth neither from the east nor from the vvest, but God is iudge, and hee setteth vp one and pulleth downe another. Thinke vve vpon this, and Simile. Psal. 75. 6, 7.

it will humble vs: who would haue thought that *Dauids* holineſſe ſhoulde haue beene ſo ſtained in the puddle of vncleanneſſe? Who woulde haue thought that *Salomon* his wiſedome ſhould euer haue bin wrapt vp in the follie of women? Who would haue thought that *Sampſons* ſtrength had ſlept in the lap of weakeneſſe? Who woulde haue thought that ſuch a valiant ſouldier as *Peter* vvas, would haue prooued ſuch a covvard as hee vvas afterwards? vvhat doe all theſe but crie vvith one voice, take heede hovv you walke, for it is God that vpholdeth. Howe many Iudges haue come downe from the bench to the barre? hovve many priſoners haue gone vp from the barre to the bench? howe many dukes, earles, lords, knights, and gentlemen, how many (I ſay) both honourable and worſhipfull, vvife and learned, ſtout and valiant, haue beene pluckt from their places of honor and dignitie, like vntimely fruite from the tree? and beene brought, ſome to the gibbet, ſome to the ſcaffold, and ſome to perpetuall imprisonment? & what haue they there confeſſed but thus much, *While God vpheld vs we ſtoode, and for want of grace we fell.* Therefore let no man reioyce at our falles, for if you ſtand, god doth vphold you, and if he do not vphold you, you ſhall ſurely fall. *Haman* was neuer ſo high in the kings fauour, but at laſt

he was as high on his owne gallowes. *Mordecai* was neuer ſo neere the point of death, but at laſt he was aduaunced to great honor. *Iudas* once thought much with another, for beſtowing a box of ointment more then needed (as he thought) vpon Chriſt, at laſt hee knew that himſelfe had taken more then hee ought by thirtie pence, the price of innocent bloud. The ſwelling red ſea vvas once diuided in ſunder, which before threatned preſent death to any that durſt go into it. The ſun which runneth his courſe as a ſwift Giant, did once ſtand ſtill. The rauens did once feed *Elias*. The dogs bellies were once a graue for *Iezabel*. The fire which by nature conſumeth all, had once no power ouer the haire of a mans head. The lice, and the flies did once preuaile againſt a kinges power. The hungry Lions had once no power againſt *Daniel*. Little naked *Dauid* did once giue great armed *Goliah* the ouerthrowe. There was once a ſong of *Saules* thouſand. & *Dauids* ten thouſand. And what was once, which may not be againe if God will? Therfore let no man be proud of that he is, but let him remember what hath been, and what may be, and that none vpholdeth from falling but God.

Thou vpholdeſt me (ſaith *Dauid*) Thinke we vpon this text when wee ſee the hand of

God

God in iuſtice vpon any malefactor? we run out by troupes to ſee ſome executed, ſome whipped, and ſome to be ſome other way openly ſhamed: we ſee them, we talk of them, we woonder at them, and ſo we forget them. But if wee woulde then take ſo much paines, as to lay our inſide to their outſide, that is, our owne faultes concealed in Gods mercy with their faultes reuealed in Gods iuſtice, wee would then pitie their caſe, and feare our ſelues: we would pray for them, and for our ſelues, we would hũbly thank god, which by his grace had kept vs from falling. For if the Lord in mercy ſhould not vphold vs, we might be theeues, or murtherers, and commit any wickedneſſe as well as others. And this let vs know, that the Lord doth but pick them out to preach this vnto vs, that except hee vphold vs wee fall, and except wee repent wee ſhall fall. *Thou vpholdeſt me* (ſaith *Dauid*, both a king and a Prophet and therfore both mightie and learned) to teache vs that there is none ſo great for liuing, ſo high for authoritie, nor ſo excellent for learning, but muſt depend on God, and truſt in God for all theſe, or elſe he is no body: The blind world is in another vaine, and their vaine is vaine indeede: for they thinke that honeſtie and pietie doe go by wealth and authoritie, and not by the grace of God. And therefore

when

when they grow to be wealthy in the world, or when they haue gotten authoritie into their handes, they begin to lift vp the head, and to turne vp the snout in the winde, then they dispence with themselues to disgrace al that come before them, if they like them not: and to disdaine all their poore neighbors, be they neuer so godly, but themselues cannot chuse but be honest, and godly, because they are rich, and in authoritie.

But what if they chaunce to be taken in a trip, as the wiliest foxe is somtime taken in a snare? what if they be conuinced of falling, or slipping, or some notorious crime? what, then? doe they then flie to God? nothing lesse, but to their wealth, or friendes, or authoritie, or some worldly deuise, and thus they say in their heartes, Thou my money, or thou my countenance, or thou my wealth, or thou my friend in the court, shalt vphold me: and so, many times through corruption, for friendship, and fauour, for a gift, a present or a bribe, a bad man, and a badde cause are vpholden, which should be cast into the dust. But *Achab* shalbe slaine though he will not be known to be *Achab*; and *Ieroboams* wife shall be knowne though shee disguiseth herselfe: for only they shal stand vpright whom the Lord vpholdeth, and none else: *For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and*

the

The way of the wicked shall perish. But see the blindnesse of these wise worldlinges: because they are wealthy, or mighty, or craftie, they thinke themselues safe enough, and what neede they pray to God for his grace to vphold them? nay, they make a wonder at him that talketh of any such matter: whereas indeed the more wealth, or authoritie, or learning, or credite, or friendes, or any worldly commoditie a man hath, the more neede he hath of Gods grace to vphold him from extremities on euery side, for els al these things will bee but so many ropes whereby Sathan will pull him to hell.

Psal. 1. 6

Last of all, if this doctrine were well learned, and stedfastly beleeued, it would serue in steed of a moderator to end many bitter contentions. For commonly in contending one with another, we say, Thou art this, and that, and I am this, and that, thy better, and honester then thou, and so forth. But the Apostle giueth vs other counsell. *Brethren, if any man* (saith he) *be fallen by occasion, you that be spirituall restore such a one with the spirite of meekenesse, considering thy selfe, lest thou also be tempted.* And (saith hee) in another place, *Wee our selues also were in times past vnwise, disobedient, deceiued, seruing lustes and diuers pleasures, liuing in maliciousnesse, and enuie, hatefull and hating one another: but*

Galat. 6. 1

Tit. 3. 3. 4

when

when the bountifulneſſe and loue of God our Sauiour appeared, we were otherwiſe; and ſo may others be hereafter, which are not yet, and we may be hereafter as others are nowe, if God doth not vpold vs: for it is hee that vpholdeth them which ſtand, which raiſeth them that are downe, which ſtrengtheneth the weake, and caſteth downe the proud in the imagination of their heartes.

Now let vs pray.

THE FIFT SERMON, December 12.

4. Sabboth.

And doeſt ſet me before thy face for euer.

WE haue heard already that God did vphold *Dauid* in his innocencie, whereby he was aſſured of Gods fauour towardes him. Now we ſhall heare, howe God preſerued him in ſafety, which is another pledge

pledge of his loue towardes him. In these wordes we haue two things to consider. First what God did for *Dauid*, *hee set him before his face*. Secondly, how long this loue lasted, *for euer*, when he saith, *Thou doest set me before thy face*. It is as much as if hee should say, by manifest signes and tokens of deliuerance, thou doest let me know that thou hast me in remembrance: for when God seemeth to forget his children, he is said to hide his face, as appeareth in *Psalm* 44. 24. where the Church complaineth in this maner, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our miserie and affliction*: that is, why doest thou not shew vs thy helpe, that we may knowe thou doest remember vs? Therefore when he doth make it manifest that he doth remember vs, he is said to set vs before his face.

This sheweth what a care the Lord hath of them whom he loueth, and what affection he doth beare vnto them whom hee vpholdeth in the integritie of their heart, as a thing which a man hath alwaies in his sight: so doth God loue his children, that he cannot abide for loue to let them go out of his sight. As the husband that loueth his wife, thinketh himself not well til she hath his companie, & he her presence: so God loueth the Church his spouse, that he cannot abide to be without her companie, and thinkes her not safe,

except

except ſhe be in his preſence to beholde the light of his countenaunce, therefore it pleaſeth the Lord Ieſus, not only to call himſelfe the head of his church, & the church his body, but alſo to terme his church the fulneſſe of himſelfe, although hee filleth all in all things, as though he were imperfect without his Church. As the father or the mother will haue that infant in their ſight, which they loue moſt dearely, ſo God will haue his Church in his ſight, vvhich hee loueth moſt tenderly. As the tutour will haue his pupill in his preſence to ſhewe his care and his loue towards him, ſo the Lord, which hath taken vpon him our tuition doth ſet vs before his face, that vve may knowe vvhat care hee hath ouer vs, therefore are ſuch phraſes vſed in the Scripture, as *Eſay*, 49. 15. 16. *Can a woman forget her child and not haue compaſſion on the ſonne of her wombe? though they ſhould forget, yet wil not I forget thee, ſaith the Lord. Beholde I haue grauen thee on the palme of my handes, thy walles are euer in my ſigh*, to ſhew that no ennemies can come againſt his church, but hee muſt knowe them, and no breaches can bee made in the walles of his Church, but he muſt ſee them, and ſee who made them. And ſo long it cannot chuſe but go vvell vvith his church. And therefore it followeth in the next Verſe. *Thy builders* 17.

Ephe. 1. 23

Eſay 49. 15. 16

make

make haſte, and thy deſtroyers, and thoſe that made thee waſte, are departed from thee. In the
Ioh. 10.28. 10 of *S. Iohn* 28. The ſonne himſelfe ſaith of his ſpouſe the elect. *I giue vnto them eternal life, neither ſhal anie plucke them out of my hand*, to ſhewe howe ſafe they are with him, and howe mindfull hee is of them. In figure whereof, *Aaron* the high Prieſt (who was alſo a figure of Chriſt) was commaunded by
Exod. 28. 17. 18. 19. 20. God in the 28 of *Exodus* to weare a breaſt-plate with foure rowes of precious ſtones. *In the firſt row, a Rubie, a Topace, and a Carbuncle. In the ſecond row, an Emeraude, a Saphire, and a Diamond. In the third row, a Turkis, an Achate, and a Hemetite. In the fourth row, a Chryſolite, an Onix, and a Iaſper. And the ſtones ſhalbe according to the names of the children of Iſrael, twelue according to their names, grauen as ſignets, euerie one after his name, and they ſhalbe for the twelue Tribes:* all this is to ſhew what accompt the Lord doth make of his choſen people. But where muſt theſe ſtones be worne? he ſheweth where in the 29. verſe. *So Aaron ſhall beare the names of the children of Iſrael, in the breſtplate of iudgment vpon his heart, when he goeth into the holie place, for a remembrance continually before the Lord. And* Aaron *ſhall beare the iudgement of the children of Iſrael vpon his heart continually.* And what is this for, but to ſhewe the

con-

continuall care that Christ hath of his Church. For *Aaron* is a figure and resemblance of Christ, the pretious stones are a figure of the Church of Christ. *Aaron* must weare them vppon his breast, that is in his sight, so Christ hath his people alwaies in his sight. As it was impossible for *Aaron* to forget the stones, which were in his sight, so is it impossible that Christ our true *Aaron* should forget his people, which beleue in his name, but hath them in continuall remembrance, being now gone into the holy of holies, that is, the kingdome of his father, the most holy place of all. And the same care, which the Lord Iesus had of the Iewes his choise people at the first, the same care hath he of the Gentiles, that is, of vs and other nations of the earth, which beleeue in him: because the wall of separation is pulled downe, and there is now no respect of persons with the Lord, but in all nations hee that feareth the Lord, and worketh righteousnesse is accepted of him. Gallath. Act 10.

As for me thou doest set me before thy face for euer.

This then sheweth that none are in such safetie as the godly, none so wel guarded as the godly, none so well prouided for as the godly, for God doth set them before his

face for euer, so that howsoeuer the worlde goeth, yet God doth alwaies remember them, as he did remember *Abraham* when Sodome was destroied, for as he was mindfull of his promise, which hee made to our forefather *Abraham*, which is called the father of the faithfull, so will hee bee no lesse mindfull of his promise, which hee made to his seede, that is to all the faithfull for euer. Because he is the Lord and chaungeth not. Who dareth offer violence to the Princes beloued in the presence of the Prince? Who shall presume to take the signet off the princes finger? Who will take a praye out of the Lions clawe? And who shall snatche the Lordes chosen out of his hand, whom he hath set as a signet vpon his right hand: If there bee no safetie in the presence of the owner where is safetie? Nature doth teache vs no lesse. The child (fearing to be hurt of any body) runneth before his father or his mother, and then thinkes himselfe safe. Nature hath taught the very dogge to runne before his master, when he feareth any body, that commeth to hurt him. But yet these may bee deceiued, for, what if the father be so vnnatural that hee will not rescue his childe? or if hee be willing, what if hee be not able, being ouermatched? or if he be able and willing at one time, what if his minde change, & what if

Gen. 19. 29.

Luke 1. 72. 73

Mal. 3. 6.

if his affectiō be estranged at another time? if he be not altered in affection, what if hee knoweth not when his sonne is iniuried? if hee knoweth when, what if hee knoweth not by whom? if he knoweth by whom, what if he cannot come by him? And many things mo, what then? why then? *Vltra posse non est esse.* He can do no more then he can. But with the Lord our heauenly father it is not so: for, as he is able being almightie, so hee is most willing being our father through his sonne Christ. As hee is willing, so is he vnchangeable: as hee is vnchangeable, so hath hee all knowledge, and therefore knoweth by whō, at what time, in what place, in what maner, and for what cause any thing is done in the whole world, and as hee hath all knowledge, so is his maiestie euery where present: therfore there is no flying from his presence. And as he is euery where, so is hee iust and true, and therefore cannot be bribed, nor peruerted, and as he is all in all thinges, so all things are his, and of him are all things whatsoeuer they be, and therefore hee hath neede of nothing. What shal we say more? shal not therfore Gods children bee most safe, and most happy before his face, in whose presence is life, and at whose right hand are pleasures for euermore? No doubt of it. Let the wicked then tremble, let *Sanballat* and *Tobias* bee Psal. 139

astonished, let *Ashur* and *Pashur* be abashed, let *Corah* and his companie bee confounded, let *Ioab* and *Iudas* go hang themselues with their trecherous kisses, and their traiterous conspiracies, let *Ananias* dissemble, and his wife take his part, & let thē perish in their hypocrisie. And the foxes which seek to destroy the Lords vineyard, (and their cubbes by whose vnderminings the vine hath but small grapes,) let them take heed that they be not taken in their own wilinesse, for they cannot go so closely, nor yet so cunningly to worke against Gods children, but the Lord seeth them well enough. *For hee hath set his children before his face for euer.*

Cant. 2. 15

This was it that dismaied *Parrie* that bloudy butcher, when he came with a full resolution to lay hands vpon the Lords annointed: he sawe in her very countenance the face of God, that is, some litle spark of his Maiesty, which did so coole his courage, that his traiterous hand was not able to accomplish the bloudy deuise of his heart, the Lordes name be blessed for euer. And were it possible for her to haue escaped so many daungers as she hath passed through euen from her infancie, if the Lord had not set her before his face, & giuen his louing kindnes charge to waite vpon her? The Lord therefore set her in his sight, and defend her with the light of his

counte-

countenance for euermore.

But if this be true some wil say, why do the wicked seeme to preuaile so often as they do against those which feare the Lord? Surely it is true, they seeme indeede to preuaile against them, when they confound themselues. And for the most part their laughter is but from the teeth outward, and the end of their mirth is heauinesse. But the truth is for that God seeing his children to waxe proud of his presence, and to forget themselues like the Disciples, when they sawe Christ a little transfigured, he hides his face for a while, & sets the wicked vpon them, and giueth Sathan leaue to sift them, yet not so, but that he hath still an eie vnto them, and will see thē take no hurt. What a comfort is this to the godly: to think that when heauen and earth go togither, yet their God hath them in an euerlasting remembrance: but for this, they were of all men most miserable: for but fewe in the world do care for them. But our vntamed nature will not so be aunswered, and our impatient humours will not so bee satisfied: for wee feare that if wee should striue to leade a godly life, to put vp wronges, and to walke in inocencie and faithfulnesse, no body will care for vs, or regard vs, wee shall lie op to the iniuries of al the world, euerie bodies plough will go ouer vs, and make long

Prou. 14. 13

Math. 17. 4

furrowes vpon our backes. This indeede is the voyce of worldly reaſon, but faith in Gods promiſes is of another minde, that ſaith, *I beleeue in God the father almightie*, that is, I am perſwaded that God which is my father in Chriſt, is willing to ſaue mee, and being almighty is able to ſaue mee, and according to his gracious promiſe will ſee mee take no wrong. When my father and
Pſalm. 27. mother forſooke me (ſaith *Dauid*) the Lord tooke me vp. I am poore and in miſery (ſaith he) but the Lord careth for me. But thou will ſay, this is particularly ſpoken of *Dauid*, what is that to me? yes ſaith the Prophet, it is for thee to, for who ſo dwelleth in the ſecret of the moſt high, ſhal abide in the ſhadow of the almightie, *I will ſay vnto the Lord, O*
Pſal. 91. *my hope and my fortreſſe, hee is my God in him will I truſt, ſurely he will deliuer me from the ſnare of the fowler, and from the noyſome peſtilence, &c.*

As this comfort is great, and large, yet it pertaineth to none but to the godly: for this loue token is giuen to none, but to ſuch as
Pſalm. 73. ſtand in the integritie, and vprightneſſe of their heart. *Yet God is good to Iſrael* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) but marke what followeth, *euen to thoſe that are pure in heart*, to teache vs, that if wee woulde bee ſuch as God will be good vnto, we muſt firſt be ſuch as God doth

delight

delight in, for not the Cananites, nor the Egyptians, nor the Moabites, nor the Hittites, nor the Amorites, but the Israelites were represented by the pretious stones vppon the heart of the high priest. So, not the Idolatrous, nor superstitious, nor couetous, nor the malicious, nor proude, nor prophane, nor beastly contemners of God, but the true worshippers of God, the meeke, the faithfull, the lowly, the godly, shalbe had in remẽbrance before the Lord. Whosoeuer can truely say with *Dauid, thou vpholdest me in mine integritie*, may vndoubtedly follow, and cheerefully sing with *Dauid, and thou doest set mee before thy face.*

But howe long will the Lord set his children before his face? *for euer*, saith the Prophet, that is, he wil neuer be weary of doing good vnto them, but from time to time hee will stand by them, no power shal withstand him, no pollicie shall preuent him, no eloquence shal turn him, no wisedome shal circumuent him, no bribes shal peruert him, for he hath sworne once by his holinesse, that he will neuer faile his seruant *Dauid*, nor alter the decree that is gone out of his mouth. His knowledge decreaseth not, his strength abateth not, his arme is not shortened. His giftes are without repentaunce. Hee is not like *Isaac* that hath but one blessing, but the

Prou.21.31

Psal.89.35

Rom.11

Gen.27.38

more he giueth the more he hath to giue, his storehouse is euer emptied, & euer full. The pooles of his mercy, are not like the poole about Ierusalem, which might bee dried vp
2.King.19 with tramplings of an army of horsemen and horses, but they are such as all the sinnes of a thousand worldes can neuer drie vp, much lesse the sinnes of his chosen. Therefore it is
Psal.130.7.8 said in the Psalme, *With the Lord is mercie, and with him is plenteous redemption & he shal redeeme Israel from all his sinnes*, if they were moe then they are: for his redemption is not scant redemption, no more then needes must, like a garment that is but fit for one mans backe onely, but it is plenteous, and
Psal.136 abounding, euen for euer and for euer,
Math.14.20 like the fiue loaues and two fishes, which fed fiue thousand to the full, and yet were not spent, by twelue baskets full which remained, & that was more then was set down. His loue to his church was before al worlds. In this life he loueth, and for euer hee loueth vs: therefore his loue is called euerlasting loue. *He doth set his people before his face for euer*, that is, in prosperitie, in aduersitie, in sickenesse, in health, in peace and in warre, and at all times, in bed and at boord, in the house, & in the field, abroad & at home, at sea & at land, in tẽple and in tent, & in al places: therefore is he called the God of the hilles

and

and the god of the vallies, what shall I say more? He is for euer the same, and changeth not. He hath not two willes, as the Papistes do teach: a former will, and an after will, a doctrine most damnable, and vncomfortable, *but he is God and neuer changeth, and the righteous shall therefore be had in an euerlasting remembrance.* Hee doeth not say, the rich or the pleasant conceited, or the mightie, or the wittie, or the beautifull, &c. *But the righteous shall be had in remembraunce.* As if hee should say, the wicked shall be euerlastingly forgotten, be they neuer so wise, neuer so wealthie, neuer so mightie, neuer so craftie, or neuer so well liked amongest men, because they are not righteous. 2. King. 20, 28. Malac. 3. Psal. 112. 6.

Then you see that no infirmitie, no sickenesse, no weakenes, no simplenesse, no base parentage, no low estate, no miserie, nor affliction, no deuill of hell can make the Lord, either to forget, or to forsake those, which haue had once the assurance of his loue, for whom he loueth he loueth for euer. Therefore if iniquitie come, or if securitie steale vpon vs, let this doctrine be a staffe to staie vs vp in our integritie, if sickenesse come, or pouertie come, or crosses come, or affliction come, nay if al the deuils in hel come, let this doctrine vpholde our faith in his promises, *which is faithful for euer, and cannot deny* 2. Tim. 2. 13.

deny himselfe, let it bee a brasen wall to thy conscience against despaire, let it be a preseruatiue against the infection of sinners, let it be a cordiall for our fainting spirites, let it sweeten all our sorrowes, and swallow vp all our cares. And while we liue, let vs comfort one another with these wordes, *It is the Lord that vpholdeth vs in our integritie, and doeth set vs before his face for euer*, for the wordes are comfortable, and the Lorde giue a blessing that they may be profitable. Nowe let vs pray.

THE SIXT SERMON, December 19. Sab. 5.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel world without end. So be it, euen so be it.

THe Prophet *Dauid* hauing receiued assurances of Gods fauour towards him, he prayseth God the giuer. What tokens he had of gods loue both without

out him, and within him, wee haue heard in the verſes before: of his behauiour after the receit thereof, we ſhal heare in this laſt verſe. He now returneth to god, for his iewelles, ſuch as he had, praiſe and thankeſgiuing, loue for loue, praiſes for bleſsings, as was his duty. The lord of loue wooeth *Dauid* his beloued, hee hath wonne his affection, *Dauid* is the Lordes, both in body and ſoule, and in al that hee hath, *Dauid* is happy thereby, for he is ſaued thereby, but the Lord is neuer the richer for his gift. In *Dauids* thankeſgiuing, wee may obſerue tvvo thinges; firſt, to whome hee offereth his ſacrifice of prayſe: ſecondly, in what manner hee offereth it. For the firſt, it is the Lorde to whome hee doeth offer it, and to none but the Lord. Papiſts ſay, Bleſſed be god and our lady, bleſſed be god and ſuch a ſaint, and ſuch a ſaint, for this and that bleſsing: ſo doth not gods child heere, *Ergo* they are not gods children in ſo doing. A man after gods owne heart doeth not ſo, *Ergo* they are not men after gods own hart in doing ſo. Great reaſon had *Dauid*, and great reſon haue al the faithful to praiſe god only: for firſt, who kept *Dauids* enemies from triumphing againſt him but the Lorde? who vpheld him in his integrity, but the Lorde? who ſet him before his face for euer, but the lord? *Ergo* who muſt be praiſed but the lord?

This

This was the Lordes owne doing, and this was the Lords only doing, therefore he only is to be praiſed. Againe, the Lord which ſaueth vs euen for his owne name ſake, wil not haue his glory parted betweene him and his creatures, but giuen wholy to himſelfe, as the prophet *Eſay* ſaith, therefore curſed be they, whatſoeuer they bee, that dare ioyne anye whatſoeuer, as partners with God, eyther in his workes, or in his worſhip. For his maner of praiſing God, it is moſt excellent, for he doth it in ſuch wordes and manner as noteth a wonderfull earneſt affection in him towardes the Lord, a great zeale of his glorie, great humilitie in himſelf, and a great feare leſt hee ſhould not doe it as he ought: for firſt, hee doth not ſay ſimply, bleſſed be God, but bleſſed be the Lorde God of Iſrael, to ſhewe that nothing in himſelfe deſerued ſuch loue at Gods hands, but only the couenant which the Lord made with his Church moued him thereunto, *Dauid* being a member of the church. Secondly, as Gods loue is infinite and euerlaſting, ſo accordingly hee praiſeth his name for it, ſaying, *world without end*. Thirdly, to ſhew his hartie, and vnfained conſent to that which hee ſpake, hee ſaieth, *So be it*, and as one not repenting him of that he had ſaide, but rather fearing that hee came too ſhort in the firſt, he doubleth his

his ſpeech, and with a ſecond blow to rowſe vp his heart and affection, which were ſcant awakened with the firſt, he ſaith, *So be it*, and againe I ſay, *So be it. So be it, euen ſo be it.*

The doctrine that is to be gathered from this verſe, ariſeth two wayes, firſt from the matter ſubiect: ſecondly, from the forme of the words. The matter ſubiect of the verſe is *Dauids* thankeſgiuing to the Lorde, for that he had ſo many wayes ſealed vp, and made ſure his loue vnto his ſoule. From which example we may gather this general doctrine, that after benefites receiued of God, it is our duetie and our delight to returne thankes vnto the Lord, if Gods loue be ſweete vnto vs. And this duty can none performe aright but the elect children of God, which are led by Gods ſpirit, indued with gods grace, enriched with gods benefites, and inflamed with his loue. Al of vs do begge and craue like lepers, but ſcarce one of ten doe returne praiſes and thankeſgiuing for our healing, as though Gods giftes were not worth thanks. Wee are not ſo kinde to the Lorde for all his benefites, as wee are to a mortall man for one curteſie. Onely the faithfull being once throughly enlightened, and effectually called, are afraide to omit or neglect this duetie, and when they do faile therein, they are not a little grieued thereat: and that they do, for

Gods

Gods spirite is in them. Therefore as they pray by the spirit, so by the same spirit they praise God: alwayes knitting vp their prayers with thankesgiuing, for they must not be separated. *Daniel* prayed and praised God three times a day on his knees: no doubt hee did it oftner as occasion was offered, but this he bound himselfe vnto what businesse soeuer he had, because of his dulnesse: to teach vs what we must do. But how many deuoure the graces of god one after an other like to a hogge vnder the tree, neuer looking vp to the tree from whence they come: as though all that god sendeth were nothing. Some are afraid to be acknowen who did them good, or gaue them goodes, like the blinde mans father, who for feare of the Iewes durst not tel who gaue his sonne his sight. Some are ashamed like *Sarah*, who laughed at the angels message, when she should rather haue giuen thanks: and this is because the wicked mocke the godly for praising of god, as the sonne of the bondwoman mocked the sonne of the freewoman, and it is now become a reproch to speake any one worde amongest many to the praise of god: whereof it commeth that the most part both at bed & bord do so commonly forget to praise the Lorde, but like beasts they sit and lie downe, and like beasts they rise vp againe. But little may we do be-

Dan 6.10.

Iohn 9.21.

Gen 18.13.

loued,

loued; if we can not by prayer aske leaue of God to take his blessings, when vve haue no right to any thing but in Christ, and little may we do, if we cannot giue him thanks, & acknowledge him to be the giuer. Thus like theeues we steale the Lords benefites, and do nothing for them, as if we should boldly go into our neighbours house, and take our dinner, and his plate, and goe away, and neuer say, with your leaue, nor I thanke you: the Lord open our eyes, and touch our heartes: Some that woulde seeme to be a little more manerly, will vtter, nay I may more truely say, smother out a few cold words of course, like gossips and protestants at large, when they meete one an other, Heere is a goodly weather god be praised, O you haue a sweet child neighbour, God blesse him, God be thanked of your vpsitting, or your comming abroad again, &c: but if any thing be added more then these commō gratulations, wherby God may reape more glorie, that is a note of a Puritane, and he is too holy for our company. Some would giue god thankes oftner then they doe, but they can not remember him without a picture, or a crucifix, or some Popish relike, like the idolatrous Iewes, which could not remember god til they saw a calfe. As though the Lordes daily benefites were not sufficient remembrances & liuely pic-

pictures of the Lords goodnesse, or as though vvhen any doth bestovv a benefit vpon vs by his sonne, vvee should not thanke his father because we neuer savve him, and vve vvant his picture.

Some vvill for fashion sake giue God a good word or tvvo, and say perhaps, God is a good god, God be blessed, I thanke God for my deliuerance, &c. but then they must run a long discourse of them selues, But if I had not done this and that, if I had not played the man, and had a good forecast, &c. it had not gone so wel with me as it did. Thus many deale vvith god, like him that vvhen he hath told out his money to his creditor vvhich he ought him, and taken vp his bond, snatcheth vp his money againe; and for an hundreth pound giueth him a peny and a boxe on the eare. But to leaue al these to the Lord, this is most certaine, if we be afraid, or ashamed, or forgetfull, or indifferent to praise the Lord: or if we be vnreuerent, or idolatrous, or superstitious in praysing God, how can wee assure our selues to be the children of god?

But note further in this holy seruaunt of god, how hee was qualified, and prepared, before he would, or before he could offer any sacrifice of praise acceptable to god. First he examineth his heart, and findeth his affections holy, and vpright before the Lord, his

heart

heart free from reuenge, his ſpirit humbled vnder the hand of God, his ſoule aſſured of Gods fauour, and his faith ſetled in his promiſes: this being done, hee proceedeth and ſaieth, *Bleſſed bee the Lorde God of Iſrael, &c.* aſſuring himſelfe, that when his perſon is accepted with God, his praiſes and thankeſgiuing ſhal not be reiected. This is to teach vs, that they which come vnſanctified, and vnprepared by a liuely faith and true repentance, and haue nothing to commend them vnto God, but their pride, their hatred, their infidelitie, their impietie, and ſuch like, they cannot praiſe the Lord, and if they do, it is returned vpon their heades as ſinne: and ſo they are ſent away, not onely empty, but in worſe caſe then they came, like the vnwoorthy gueſt that came to the kings feaſt without his wedding garment. And this doctrine runneth currant thorough the whole body of the ſcriptures, and no man doeth aske from whence it commeth or whither it goeth, but euery one of the Lordes Seers and ſeruantes giueth teſtimonie vnto it. The pſalmiſt is of that mind, for he ſaith, *The eies of the Lorde are vpon the righteous, and his eares are open to their crie, but the face of the Lorde is againſt them that doe euill, to cut off the remembrance of them from off the earth*, to thew how little the Lorde regardeth their prayers, or any thing Pſal. 34. 15, 16.

that they can offer vnto his Maiestie. *Salomon* is likewise of the same minde, for hee

Prou.15.8. saith, *The sacrifice of the wicked is abhomination to the Lorde, but the prayer of the righteous is acceptable vnto him.* Hee sheweth a good reason vvhy. *For* (saieth hee) *the way of the wicked is abhomination to the Lord, but hee loueth them that followe righteousnesse.* In

Prou.17.7. another place hee saieth, *High talke becommeth not a foole.* If high talke becommeth not a foole, much lesse doth diuine talke become a wicked man: for what talke higher then talke with the most High? and who so foolish as the wicked and profane? The prophet *Esay* is also of the same minde, for hee (speaking in the person of God) saith thus,

Esay 1.15. *When you shall stretch out your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you, and though you make many praiers, I wil not heare you, for your hands are ful of bloud,* that is, your deedes are full of oppression, and therefore your prayers, and praises are stained with your bloudy handes.

S. Luke saith, *That deuils came out of many, crying and saying, thou art Christ the sonne of the liuing God, but Christ rebuked them, and*

Luke 4.41. *suffered them not to say that they knew him to be that Christ,* because they were deuilles. For our Sauiour Christ will not be praysed out of a Deuilles mouth, for their commendation tendeth rather to his discredite then o-

therwise:

therwise: so deuilish men may perhappes come out of many houses, to church, and cry we praise thee O God, we knowe thee who thou art, *Iesus the sonne of the liuing God, glorie be to the Father, and to the Sonne, and to the holy Ghost*, and many good wordes and speeches mo they vtter, but surely the Lorde is so farre from accepting anye suche thing at their hands, that he is more prouoked to anger against them for it, because they are deuilish, and come without repentaunce into the presence of the most Holy. The like in all respects shal we reade of in the 16. of the Actes. A certaine maide had a spirit of diuination, she was such a one as some ignorantly call a cunning woman, no better then a witch or a coniurer, one that wrought by the deuill, and could by helpe of the deuill tell where things were that were lost, and such a one followed *Paul* and *Silas*, crying, *These are the seruants of the most high God, and this she did many dayes. But Paul being grieued, turned about and saide to the spirit, I commaund thee in the name of Iesus Christ, that thou come out of her.* Nowe as Gods seruantes coulde not abide the confession of the deuill, much lesse can God himselfe abide it, being onely for feare, and not of loue. A strange thing that deuils which are at defiance with God, shuld confesse him. And yet (al things duely consi-

dered) it is not so strange as it may seeme to be, for what if they doe it of constraint whether they will or no? or what if it be for feare onely and not for loue? or what if they do it to bring credit vpon their owne matters, and to bring Gods matters into contempt? then the strangenesse of the matter is diminished: for indeed this is common, not onely among the deuilles, but amongest all the reprobate. Sathan shall alleadge scripture to credite his owne cause, and *Balam* will not (because hee cannot) passe the boundes of that which god hath put in his mouth, when his heart hunteth for the wages of iniquitie. Sometime to make them inexcusable God will wring a confession from their owne mouths, as he did from *Pharao*. Sometime the wicked will doe that, which their hart goeth against, to bring gods seruants in question amongst men, like the cunning maide before mentioned. Somtime to deceiue the more easily, and strongly, he will change himselfe into the likenesse of an angel of light, & put vpon a fowle matter a faire cloake of holinesse. The trueth whereof may sufficiently appeare in the kingdome of Popery, amongest the monkes and friers, which vnder pretence of holinesse commit all kinde of wickednesse. I haue knowen some Arrian heretiques, whose life hath beene most strict amongest men,

whose

whose tongues haue beene tyred with scripture vpon scripture, their knees euen hardned in prayer, and their faces wedded to sadnesse, and their mouthes full of praises to God, while in the meane time, they haue stowtly denied the diuinitie of the Sonne of God, and haue not sticked to teare out of the Bible, all such places as made against them, such were *Hamond*, *Lewes* and *Cole* heretikes of wretched memorie lately executed and cut off in Norwich. What shal I say of *Frances Ket* another Arian which succeeded them, in opinions more monstrous then his predecessours, for hee helde that whosoeuer will bee saued, must before hee die, goe to Ierusalem: that Christ with his Apostles are nowe personally in Iudea gathering of his church: that the faithfull should miraculously be preserued at Ierusalem, with a wall of fire, and be fed with Angelles foode from heauen: but these were his dreames, and yet such dreames as (rather then he would forgo them, hauing once embraced them) caused him to plunge himselfe ouer head and eares in most damnable & cursed heresies. For behold, to maintaine his former fancies, he held most impudently that Christ is not God, but a good man as others be, and that which was neuer heard before, that Christ hath suffered once for his owne sinnes, and shal (before the

end of the world) suffer againe, for the sinnes of the world, and that being done, he shal be then made God after his second resurrectiō. And yet as monstrous as hee was in opinion, see how holy hee would seeme to bee in his outward conuersation. The sacred Bible almost neuer out of his handes; himselfe alwayes in prayer, his tongue neuer ceased praising of God, when he went to the fire he was clothed in sackecloth, hee went leaping and dauncing: being in the fire, aboue twenty times together, clapping his hands, he cried nothing, but blessed bee God, blessed bee God, blessed be God, and so continued vntill the fire had consumed all his neather partes, and vntill he was stifled with the smoke that he could speake no longer: all which I was a witnesse of my selfe. But shall we thinke that the Lord tooke any delight in the prayers or praises of such a deuill incarnate? farre be it from vs. A strange and fearefull example of a desperate, of a hardened, and a cursed creature, and yet not to be wondered at, for the deuill hath his souldiers and martires as well as the Lord, and oftentimes they are more resolute in the deuilles quarrell, then some are in Gods quarrell. As for his willing and ready going, with his constant induring, it was no more then is perfourmed by such as hang themselues, or drowne themselues,

but

but what pleasure hath the Lord in the sacrifices of such? what shal we say of our English *Donatists*, our schismaticall *Brownistes*, and followers of Barrow and his crew? they hold our Church for no visible Church, neither that we haue so much as a face of a church amongst vs: they condemne all our assemblies at their pleasure, terming vs & our churches to be but dunghils, and synagogs of Sathan, our Ministerie no Ministerie, our Sacraments no Sacraments, our teachers they doe terme Baals priests, the taile of the red dragon: the whole Church of England, they call Babylon, Sodome, Egypt, and al that naught is, thus they cast mire in the face of their mother, in whose bowels they were first begotten (if euer they were begotten) to the Lord, separating themselues frō all the holy things of god, because euery thing is not iust as they would haue it. But in the meane time to gette more credite vnto their pretended cause of separation, they seeme to bee very deuout in prayer, and as though the spirit of prayer were proper to them, they condemne all other mens prayers, their mouthes alwayes thundering out the iudgementes of god: while they take a felicitie in condemning their brethren, they come vnder a cloake of sincerities and reformation, while they go about to plucke vp the Lordes vineyarde by

the rootes, and none more zealous in their profession, none more deuout in praising of God, none more ready in the scriptures then they, yea as plentifull in their proofes, and textes of scripture they seeme to be for vpholding of their errours and schisme, as Ker was for the defending of his heresies, but what pleasure the Lorde hath in such schismaticall prayers and prayses, which haue nothing to present them to the Lord, but a spirite of pride and errour, I feare to speake: the Lord open their eies to see their sinne, that so many as belong to him may be conuerted and be saued.

Thus we see it manifest both by testimonies and examples, that the sacrifices of the wicked & vngodlie are vile before the Lord, how holy soeuer they seeme to be amongest men, and they cannot praise him, but as the deuils did confesse him. But if any come before the Lord as his beloued spouse, decked with their garment of diuerse colours, I meane their soules clothed with the riches of Gods fauour, as true repentance, a liuely faith, brotherly loue, lowlinesse of spirite, integritie of heart, patience in affliction, ioy in the holy Ghost, if any come to the Lord depending on Gods grace, naked in himself, yet clothed in Christ, doubting of himselfe, yet assuring himselfe of Gods fauour both

pro-

promiſed and purchaſed in the bloud of Chriſt Ieſus, they may bring their offering with *Dauid*, and ſay, *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael*, & the king of glory ſhall then haue delight in their beautie, for hee loueth the praiſes of his people, and of none els.

This doctrine, if it were throughly applied, and cloſely laid to the conſcience of euery eſtate & calling, it would I hope make vs all more wary, and carefull in offering our ſelues with our preſentes of praiſes and praiers vnto the Lord while we liue. And firſt of all, what will Idolaters, and perſecutors of Gods Saintes ſay vnto this. In a merry note they ſing *Te Deum laudamus*, & *Benedictus Deus, Iſrael, &c.* But whether ſuch Popiſh, and bloudy ſeruices be accepted of God or no, I would wiſh them to conſider.

In our Church if there bee any in the place of Seers and watchmen ouer the Lords people, and yet haue neither will, ſkill, nor courage to leade the people of the Lord in the waies of righteouſneſſe, and alſo doe wearie themſelues in the waies of looſeneſſe & prophaneſſe, and yet will come into Gods houſe, and without repentance offer vp confeſſions, praiers, and thankeſgiuinges for themſelues and the people: how acceptable ſuch ſacrifices are vnto the Lord, I would wiſh them alſo to conſider.

Againe

Againe, there are some called Parishe Clarkes, which without any manner of calling thereunto from God, doe intrude themselues into the ministers office, only for a little filthy lucre sake, and most confusedly & disorderly tumble ouer the holy thinges of God, as the Lords praier, with diuers things, which I blushe to name, vnder the pretence forsooth of helping the minister to say seruice: a thing which I neuer saw, but in this place. How acceptable the praiers, & seruice of such men are, or rather how detestable it is vnto God, I would they had grace to consider.

What will hypocrites, and contemners of the word preached say to this? because they cannot chuse, they come to common praier, which indeed is too much neglected: but as for other exercises, of preaching, and Catechising (of al, the most needful, & most profitable) they dedicate those times to bowls, or cardes, or tables, or tipling, or wanton walking, and I know not vvhat, and then the exercises being done, they repaire to the ordinary seruice, where they make a fained confession, and praiers, and prayses for custome sake, but, *He that turneth his eare from hearing the lawe* (saith the holy ghost) *euen his praier shalbe abhominable*. If his praier be abhominable, what is his presumptuous

Prou. 28. 9

prating,

prating, and proude blaſpheming? Againe, let pirats and rouers at Sea, with vſurers, and oppreſſours by land, with ſwearers, drunkardes, filthy liuers, Sabboth prophaners and ſuch like, lay this to their heart, & God in mercy look vpon them, for their ſeruice done vnto god, is as acceptable to his maieſty as the harlots vowes, and offerings, of which we reade in the 7. of the Prouerbes, vvhen ſhee went about to intice vnto folly: or as if they cut off a dogges head for the Lord. Againe, if there be anie husbandes and wiues, or any neighbours, liuing in diſcord, and ſuffering their heartes to boile in hatred one againſt another, howe can they think that the Lord will be delighted with their wrathful praiers, and praiſes, when they doe offer them. What ſhould I ſay more? I woulde wiſh, and I doe earneſtly deſire, that euerie one would lay it to his heart, and to conſider with himſelfe: firſt, what a ſinne it is not to pray, and praiſe God at all: next, how the ſin is increaſed, if they be not prepared and ſanctified before they doe bleſſe God, as *Dauid* was: for the ſacrifices of the wicked are like the ſalutations of the Iews, when they bowed the knee vnto Chriſt, and ſpit in his face togither. Pſalm 7. 14

THE

THE SEVENTH SERMON, DECEMber, 26.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, &c.

THe last Sabboth day, wee heard, that *Dauid* hauing receiued assurances of Gods fauour towards him, returned praise and thankes vnto the Lord for it: and how he was prepared thereunto we also heard then declared at large: we will now consider and see in what manner and forme he praised God.

First let vs consider why he saith, not simply, *Blessed be the Lord*, but *blessed be the Lord God of Israel*. In these wordes be two points to be obserued. First, the cause why God loued him. Secondly, the largenesse, and the greatnesse of Gods loue. But first, of the cause why God loued him, and why hee did so assure him of his loue and fauor. And that was not, I warrant you, any worthinesse that the Lord found in *Dauid*, nor for his friends

friendes ſake, nor for his countries ſake, nor for his vertues ſake, but onely for his couenant ſake, which the Lord made with his Church, whereof *Dauid* was a member, and therefore muſt needs haue his part amongſt the reſt, becauſe God had ſo promiſed. *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael.* As if he ſhoulde ſay, I giue the Lord praiſe, & thanks, which hath choſen Iſrael, to bee his people, which were not his people, and hath bound himſelfe, by promiſe to be the God of Iſrael, and to watch ouer his people, and to aſſure them of his fauour, which deſerued nothing but his wrath and diſpleaſure: for by this meanes I am now aſſured of his loue; and fauour towardes me, which I ſhoulde neuer haue had if the Lord had not choſen me to bee one of them, vpon whom he meant to beſtowe his loue, according to his gratious promiſe, which he made to my fathers *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Iacob* (which was afterwardes called Iſrael:) and acccording to his promiſe which hee made, not onely to them, but alſo to al their ſeed, that is to all the faithful, ſo hath hee dealt with his ſeruantes, bleſſed, and praiſed be his name for it.

Now wee ſee the fountaine from whence ſpringeth all the good that we haue, bleſſed is Iſrael, becauſe the Lord is their God, and bleſſed is England, becauſe the Lord is our

God.

God. By this we may see what an excellent thing it is to be of the church of God, for thē the Lord *Iehouah*, the Lord almightie, is our God, and we are his people, and if he be on our side, who can be against vs? or if any be against vs, who can preuaile against vs? then are we in safetie from our enemies, then are we vpholden in our integritie, and prouided for according to our wants. So that the Lord doth not saue vs, nor helpe vs because we deserue it, but because hee hath so promised in Christ Iesus, neither doth hee chuse vs, because he saw some goodnesse in vs, but therefore is his goodnesse and grace bestowed vpon vs, because he hath first elected & chosen vs to be his people. But nowe see what a thing it is to be of the church of God, that is of the companie of Gods people, and within the compasse of Gods couenant. *The Lord loueth the gates of Sion.* That is, the gates of his Church, *more then all the habitations of Iacob*, to shew how he loueth his Church: for if hee beareth such affection to the gates, what affection doth he beare to the Citie? if he loueth the most inferiour, euen the porters of his Church, that are set to keepe the gates, what doth he for the chiefe Citizens, the cōmonwealth of Israel? No maruel though *Dauid* desired to be a doore-keeper in the house of God, for to be such a one, yea, to bee the

Psal. 87. 2

meanest

meaneſt in Gods Church, is to bee the beloued of the Lord at the leaſt, & that when it is at the leaſt, is greater then al the pleaſures, & treaſures of the earth; yea it is better then wine, ſaith the ſpouſe of Chriſt, in the *Canticles*: that is, better then al pleaſures & profites in the whole world. But what doth he for his Church? ſee what hee doth, *God is known in Iudah*, (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *his name is great in Iſrael*, as if he ſhuld ſay, God hath made his will, and his counſels knowne to his church, & the heathē haue not the knowledge of his waies. The godly are of his coūſell as *Abraham* was, and is this a ſmall matter? But ſee yet more. *In Shalem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling is in Zion*, as if hee ſhould ſay, the dwellinges of the Lord they are in peace: for *Shalem* is peace. *There brake he the arrowes, and the bowe, the ſhield, and the ſword, and the battaile. The ſtout hearted are ſpoiled, they haue ſlept their ſleepe, and all the men of ſtrength haue not found their handes. At thy rebuke O god of Iacob, both the Chariot, and the horſe are caſt aſleepe*: And therefore, becauſe thou art the god of *Iacob* (for he is ſo tender ouer his Church, that hee will not abide any thing to annoy his Church, except it be for the greater good of his church, and the further, & greater confuſion of their enemies) whom ſhall wee nowe praiſe for

Cant. 1. 1.

Pſal. 76. 1

Pſal. 147

Pſal. 76. 5

our

our deliuerance? we reckon our ships, & giue them high praises, wee vse to say in the forgetfulnesse of Gods goodnes, we may thanke such a ship, such a thing, and such a meanes & so forth, but we should say, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel*: for it is he that wil be, and must be knowne in his Church.

Whom haue we to stand by vs, if euer our enemies come againe, but the Lord God of Israel? Let vs say then as the Psalmist saith, *God is our hope and strength, and helpe in troubles readie to be found. Therefore will wee not*
Psal. 45. 1 2 *feare though the earth be moued.* Some wil say, we haue ships at sea, the Hope, the Reuenge, the Dread-nought, and so forth, nay, God is
3 our Hope, God is our Reuenge, and God is Dread-nought indeed. *Though the waues of the sea be troubled, and rage, and the mountaines shake at the surges thereof. Yet there is a riuer,*
4 *whose streames shall make glad the Citie of God, euen the sanctuarie of the Tabernacle of the most*
5 *high. God is in the midst of it, therefore it can-*
6 *not be woued. The Lord of hostes is with vs, the*
7 God of Iacob *is our refuge.* Now mark what followeth. *Come, and behold the workes of the*
8 *Lord, what desolations he hath made vpon the earth. He maketh warre to cease, he breaketh the*
9 *bow, and cuts the speare, and burneth the Chari-ots in the fire.* Now heare what the Lord himselfe saith, 10 *Be still* (saith hee) *and knowe that*

I am

I am God, I wil be exalted among the heathen, and I will be exalted in the earth. In the next verse they doe exalt him, saying: *The Lord of hostes is with vs, the God of Iacob is our refuge.* Noting, nothing to be the cause of all these workes, but onely his couenant which hee made with his Church. In the first of *S. Luke* this is plaine. *He hath vpholden Israel his seruant, being mindfull of his mercie. As hee hath promised to our forefathers* Abraham, *and his seed for euer.* The virgine *Marie* is of the same minde. *He hath sent vs deliuerance* (saith she) *from our ennemies, and from the handes of all that hate vs*: but the cause thereof was his mercy, which hee shewed to our fathers in remembring his holy couenaunt, and the othe which hee sware to our father *Abraham*, not mentioning any thing in her selfe. Therefore, whensoeuer wee stand in neede of the Lordes helpe (as wee doe continually) let vs bee sure that wee are the Israel of God, and then claime his promise, and let vs not then doubt, for he is faithfull, and cannot denie himselfe. And so much for the cause that mooued God to be so good vnto *Dauid*.

11

Luke 1.54.55

Luke 1.73

2. Tim. 2. 13

The second thing that I obserue in these wordes is the large extent of Gods loue. For, therfore doth the prophet call him the Lord God of Israel, to shew that God is not a God of one only, but of all the faithfull, to the end

of the world. He was not onely *Dauids* God, but hee is our God also, or els perhaps, some might say, Oh *Dauid* was an excellent man, and a man after Gods owne heart, and God did assist him wonderfully. But God is the same God to vs, that hee was to *Dauid*, and will assist vs as mightily as he did *Dauid*, if we call vpon him as *Dauid* did. Yea, to euery one of vs he is the same, for God is no accepter of persons, not the Iewes more then the gentiles, the wall of separation beeing pulled down, *But in euery nation, hee that feareth him and worketh righteousnesse, is accepted with him.* Whosoeuer is a right Israelite, is such a one as feareth God, and whosoeuer feareth God is a right Israelite: therefore when Iesus saw *Nathaniel*, he said, *Behold indeede an Israelite, in whom is no guile*: therefore he that feareth God, and is without guile, is an Israelite indeede, that is one of Gods children in deed; what a comfort is this to al the faithful, though they be neuer so poore, and base in the sight of men, yet God is their God, they being his people, and they may chalenge his promise as well as any other; and God will surely heare them, and they shal say, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel.*

Gal. 3. D Act. 10. 34. 35.

Now are we to cõsider of the next words, why he saith, *World without end.* Hee doth not praise God so long as the benefite of deliuerance lasteth, and no longer, but so long

as

as his mercy endureth, and that is for euer: for it hath pleaſed the Lord to chuſe vnto himſelfe a Church and a kingdome, out of angels and mē, which neuer ſhal haue end, and thoſe ſhall praiſe him continually, as well for his iudgementes as for his mercies. And this is it that *S. Iohn* ſet downe by the ſpirite of prophecie, when he ſaith, *I heard a great voice of a great multitude in heauen, ſaying, Halleluiah, ſaluation, and honour, and glorie, and power be to the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his iudgements.* We vſe to ſay, if a mortall man doth ſhewe vs anie curteſie, or beſtow any benefit vpon vs, Oh giue him great thanks: but how great thanks and what preſents ſhal we offer to God, who gaue it him firſt, and gaue him a heart to giue, and giueth for euer? If a prince ſhuld ſend vs any thing (were it neuer ſo little) for a remembrance, wee will thanke him according to the worthineſſe of his perſon, and not according to the value of the thing which was ſent. But god is the prince of all Princes, and he giueth more then trifles, for in him we liue, and moone, and haue our being, and he hath giuen vs his ſon, who hath purchaſed a kingdome for vs which ſhal neuer haue end. And if it were but our bare being here, hee were to be praiſed for euer: how much more for ſuch, and ſo many benefites, as can neither be numbred, nor valued?

Apoc. 19. 1, 2

Yea for his infinite wisedome, which he hath caused to shine in all his workes of creation: if we consider but the excellent wisedome of God in a poore little flie, he is to receiue infinite praises for the same. Howe much more for his infinite goodnesse, power, mercy, iustice and prouidence ouer all his creatures, and his vnspeakable loue towards his children in his couenant of grace?

If a silly man shall frame a cunning peece of worke, or do some notable exploit, or accomplish some hard & great peece of seruice which yet he could not doe of himselfe, it is oftentimes presented to the prince, and published to his lasting praise and renowne: but who is comparable with the Lord of hostes, whose curious and cunning workmanshippe appeareth in all his creatures, and whose right hand hath the preheminence, by doing of valiant thinges? shal not his name then be published to his euerlasting praise in his Church and congregation of his saintes? By this appeareth, what difference there is betweene our God, and the false gods of the heathen: for who doth or can doe such things as our God doth, who hath his being, and al sufficiencie of himselfe, and all others haue nothing but as hee giueth vnto them? who deserueth euerlasting praises but our God? By this it likwise appeareth, what dishonor and disgrace haue bin offered by grosse Idolaters

laters, which would take vpon them to paint and picture out the inuisible, and incomprehensible maiestie of the almightie, like a man whose breath is in his nostrels, whose being is not of himselfe, whose yeares are but a span long, and in his best estate is altogither vanitie. *Whatsoeuer ye doe* (saith the Scripture) *doe all to the glorie of* God. That is, striue to doe it so, as God may get most glory by it. Are such representations of God, to the aduauncing of his glory? what do they shew and teach vs that we might giue him euerlasting praises for? he is painted as a man, as you see in yonder story of the creation, in yonder window, in a dozen places togither: what may we learne by them? A man hath his being from another, if God be as hee is painted forth, he hath so too, which to say, is blasphemie. A man hath father and mother, but who was the Lords father, & his mother? A man is first a babe, and afterward groweth in knowledge, shall wee thinke the Lord to be such? A man hath neede of meate and drinke and apparel, and of tutors and counsellers, and many thinges mo, but who was the Lordes draper or purueiour, or counseller at any time? O cursed creatures that euer first inuented them, and cursed wretches that dare maintaine them, if God giue them not repentance: for they are such abhominations as God hath flatly forbidden, and condemned

Col. 3.

In S. Thom. Church of Bristol.

demned to the pit, yea to the very bottomlesse pit of hell. Are these the pictures of him that is to be praised worlde without end? if they be not, why are they not defaced, which do so much deface the glory of our Creator? if they be not, why are they tollerated? nay if they be not, why are they defended as lawfull, and not hurtfull to any? and that euen nowe (with shame enough) in the cleere light of the gospel? And if they be not, why should any keepe such a sturre, and be so out of patience and charitie with the minister of the Lord Iesus, for speaking against such filthy & damnable abhominations? The Lord open these mens heartes, and giue them repentaunce, if it be his wil: and so much bee spoken for that point.

So be it, euen so be it. These wordes doe shew the agreement of his mind, and consent of his heart to that which hee saide with his tongue, to teach vs, that in gods seruice wee must neither doubt of that which we do, nor wauer in the performing of our vowes, neither must we doe it fainedly, but with full consent of heart & minde. Resolution is the thing indeed that we are here taught. Resolutiō in gods matters is very requisit, as it is for a Souldier in the field: for Christian souldiers shall haue manie assaultes to make them retire. For want whereof many leaue their standing, and runne after the worlde as

Gehezi left his maisters houle, and ran after *Naaman* for gifts, til the leprosie caught him. A christian without it, is like a dore without a locke, soone open, and soone shut: for all commers, open with *Agrippa* till Christianitie be almost come in, and that is iust nothing: and shut with *Festus*, that *Paul* must stand without like a mad man. Hereof it cōmeth that many haue lost their first loue, some are neither hote nor cold, some betake thēselues with *Demas* to the present worlde, some are for all companies, and are of al religions, and so are of no religion: and most men are like reedes shaken with the winde, when as they which are resolute in gods matters, go constantly through all assaies, and stand stedfastly like mount Sion which endureth for euer. Therefore *Dauid* hauing set downe his minde, sets his hand, and his heart vnto it. *So be it* (saith hee) *euen so be it*: as if he shoulde say, I am wel aduised of that I haue saide, I doubt not of it but that it is trueth, and I know it is my duetie, and therfore, as I haue said, so I say againe, *So let it be*. But wilt thou stand to it *Dauid*, whatsoeuer come of it? Yea that I will (saith hee) and doe not repent me of it, and therefore am I so far from recanting of it, that I spake it, & I doe speake it againe, *Blessed bee the Lord God of Israel worlde without end. So be it, euen so be it.* There be three thinges in man

must agree togither in the seruice of God, the tongue, the eare, and the heart: if al these agree vpon the matter, the bill passeth: if all these be in tune, the harmonie is sweete and the musick pleasant. In euery man that commeth to heare the word of God preached, or to offer vp praiers to God, is a kinde of Parliament holden, and much adoe there is manie times to haue billes passe, because al these doe not agree vpon the matter. Gods minister in Gods name propoũdeth many things to the people, the equitie whereof he groundeth vpon the word of God, and of all these billes, some concerne God himselfe, and some concern our selues, and our neighbour. These billes come first to the lower house, that is to the outward sences: for first the eare heareth what the matter is: then the eie peruseth the bill, and searcheth the statutes of God in his word, to see how they agree togither: from thence they passe along to the higher house, that is to the vnderstanding, frõ the vnderstanding to reason, if reason like of the matter, then it cõmeth to the wil, & affections of the heart: when it cõmeth there, if the spirite of god be in the heart, then is the hart framed & counselled by the same: if the heart likes of it, the wil doth like of it too, thẽ is the tongue sent back with his answere frõ the inward house, to signifie so much to god & the world: then ask the tongue, what saith

A Parliament.

the

the heart, the tongue as the common ſpeaker ſaith, *So be it*. On the contrary ſide, if any thing goe againſt reaſon, then vnderſtanding can no skil of it, the heart forbids it, the the tong is ſilent, & *So be it* ſmothered. Many times a thing paſſeth through al to the hart, where the matter is debated between naturall reaſon and the heart, and there (for want of Gods ſpirite to countermaund naturall reaſon) it ſtayeth, and vnderſtanding can no skil of it. But what ſaith the tongue? In ſtead of *So be it*, he brings this anſwer: Sir, the heart hauing conſulted with worldly pollicie and naturall reaſon, doth find this to be againſt his profit, or againſt his pleaſure, or againſt his gain, or againſt his cuſtom, or againſt his credit in the world, & therefore this bil cannot paſſe: my maſter the heart, with reaſon, and pollicie do therefore deſire you to be contented and ſpeake no more of this matter, but of ſomthing elſe that may ſtand better with their liking: as for the reſt of the houſe, vnderſtanding, will and affection, although they know the matter to be tru, iuſt, & equall which you demaund, yet they can do no good in the matter, becauſe the other two haue nipped it in the head. Sometime the tongue ſaith *Amen*, to that which the hart condemneth, becauſe reaſon confirmeth it, & this is commonly when the eie ſeeth ſome body whom he feareth, or the eare heareth ſomthing that he can not anſwer, & therfore though the tongue be

a common speaker, yet is he not alwayes a true speaker. Somtime againe the eare admitteth, and the heart affecteth, & desireth that which reason subscribeth vnto, but for want of faith, reason reuoketh, the hart fainteth, & the tong soltereth, and either for feare, or for shame dareth not vtter what is agreed vpon within. A miserable parliamēt that hath such a speaker: but this is the mater indeed. This house hath 2 doores, at one doore the bils are brought in, & that is by the eare & the eie, at another doore they passe out again with their answers, & that is the lips within, at which the cōmon speaker stādeth. Now if the Lord do set a watch there, & keep the doore of our lips, then they are open, & the toūg doth boldly confes the truth, but if the fearefull deuill, or the bashful deuill keep the doore, the toung durst not for his life speake the trueth: God in mercy remoue such porters, that we may boldly confesse with our toungs, that which we beleeue in our heart to saluatiō. So likewise in prayer, & thāksgiuing, if our toung doth speake any thing, which the vnderstanding is ignorant of, and therfore the hart cannot affect, our sacrifices are but a mockery against God, because the parlemēt house is diuided, & there is but a mutiny betwixt the hart, the toung, & the rest: but if all agree vpon the point, then the toung sheweth the consent of the hart, & boldly without feare of any whatsoeuer, standeth forth, and sayth, *So be it.*

But

But why doth he double his ſpeech & ſay, *So be it, euen So be it?* it ſhould ſeem that the ſpeaker of the parlement houſe is but a ſimple mā, & wanted matter, he meant wel it may be, but for want of matter he is faine to harpe vpon one ſtring much. Surely beloued, the Prophet ſpake as he was mooued by the holy Ghoſt, & this is Gods wiſdome, therfore let vs not finde fault withall, this is the plaine, & ſimple dealing of a faithful ſoule indeed. It is vſual in the Scripture to haue one thing often times vrged in teaching, and no oftener then is needfull: becauſe, firſt it is long before wee can learne Gods will, ſecondly, it is longer before we can remember Gods will, but principally, becauſe it is longeſt of all before we can make a conſcience to obey gods wil: therefore let no man in hearing one thing often, be wearie, becauſe euery man may learne the ſame thing better: Doe not ſay, the Preacher wanteth matter, but ſay rather that wee want grace, or vnderſtanding, or memorie, or zeale, or loue, or ſomething. Againe, let no man in teaching ſtande ſo much vppon his reputation, as to account it a diſgrace vnto him if hee doeth often repeate one thing being neceſſarie, for wee ſee it is Gods wiſedome to teach ſo, and if any man will be wiſer then Gods ſpirit, he will proue himſelfe a foole. In prayer alſo the ſame ſpirit hath taught Gods childrē to ſpeak one thing often times, partly becauſe there

is

is in euery one great dulnes & want of feeling, and partly to note how earneſt they are & deſirous to obtaine that which they pray for. So doth *Dauid* here in this place ſay, *So be it, euen ſo be it*, as though his hart had bin ſcarce awake at the firſt. A man that would faine haue a thing which he needeth indeede, will ſay (being asked if he will haue it) oh yea, yea, yea, & if it be a thing that he can not away withall, he wil ſay, oh no, no, no, often together, as if hee could not deny it too often, as the firſt coulde not deſire it too much. This may the Church do, if their hearts be touched with their owne wants and weakeneſſes. But this ſerueth not to maintaine any idle & vnneceſſary repetitions, ſuch as were vſed in popery, & condemned by our Sauior Chriſt in the Scribes and Phariſes. In Popery they babble one thing oftentimes, Ieſus, Ieſus, Ieſus, and you muſt ſay ouer the Lordes prayer ſo many, and ſo many times together, and then you ſhalbe heard, (ſay they.) And ſo they play in their chanting, and curicus ſinging, which is more like the hunting of the foxe, then any ſpiritual and holy ſeruice of god, they are ſomtime a quarter of an heure almoſt in ſinging ſome one worde. Alas poore ſoules: they thinke that God is delighted as man is, and they thinke that the Lord is aſleep, as Baals prieſts thought, and therfore they call often, but Gods children feele their own harts aſleep, and therefore it is that they cry often in

Matth. 6.

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the ſame wordes.

So be it, euen ſo be it, ſaith the holy prophet, as if he ſhould ſay, did I ſpeake it? I will ſay it again, I do not repent me of it, I am not afraid, I am not aſhamed, if I ſaid it not with ſuch feeling the firſt time as I ought, I wil ſay it again. To ſhewe howe carefull, how conſtant, howe bold, & how holy we ſhould be in praiſing of God. For many times in our praiers our minds are croſſed with one thing or other, ſo that God hath not the heart: then to it again, *Heart* what ſaiſt thou? then *So be it, euen ſo be it*. Some thinke a cold word, vnreuerently bluſtred out, to be good enough for God, & are aſhamed to amend any thing if it be amiſſe, and afraide to ſtand to a thing if it be well. Some will vtter in table talke, whatſoeuer commeth in their minds, of God, and againſt him too ſometime, & when they ſhould either defend it, or denie it, or reforme it, they turne it away with a ieſt: Nay ſir, it is not my profeſsion, I wil not reaſon of it, nor ſtand with you in it, you are too hard for me, this is but table talk, and if there ſhuld be no arguing and diſputing, how ſhould men come by knowledge, &c. But ſee their folly, or their weakeneſſe at the leaſt: if it be true, and expedient, defend it for Gods glory: if it bee falſe recant it to the ſhame of the deuill: if it be doubtful, be inſtructed, for thy further comfort. But Gods children are well aduiſed what they ſay, and being ſo, they are not aſhamed,

nor afrayde, if they heare of it againe, but as they sayd it, so they will say it againe, *So be it, euen so be it.*

This earnest and reuerent kinde of giuing thankes doth also notably reprooue the prophannesse of some, who while thankes be offered vp to the Lorde at Table, for nourishment receiued, they are otherwise busied, looking here and there, toying with one thing or other, according to the affection of their hart. And when grace is done, they will not stande with you for *Amen*, but it shall be so snatchingly, and so shackled in the teeth and lippes, that it woulde loathe a man to heare it: which they would not doe, if they thought the Lord woorthy of thankes for his benefites: but so they do, as if he were not worthie of one colde word, and if he get any more, then they are at very great cost with him, and he must needes bee indebted to them for it: but Gods children come with great feare and reuerence, and to that which is sayde they giue their heartie consent in most reuerent maner. *So be it, euen so be it.*

Furthermore the person of *Danid* may teach vs one thing more, for he being the king, giueth thankes to God himselfe: to teach vs that it is an exercise for Kinges and Princes: but nowe most men set their litle children to doe it onely, and are ashamed to doe it themselues, as though it were a childish thing to

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giue God praiſe for his bleſsings. Say not now (as ſome haue ſaid) that I would not haue children ſay grace. Yes I would haue you traine them vp vnto it, els when they come to yeeres they will be as much aſhamed of it, as their fathers are now. But I would haue your ſelues to be the principal actors in ſo holy an action, becauſe you haue the beſt vnderſtanding: and if thou ſayeſt no more but god be praiſed for all his gifts, do it with reuerence, & from the feeling of thy heart in faith and true repentance. But if thou wilt be aſhamed to giue thy childe ſo good an example, and lay all vppon him, it may be ſayde, thy childe is come to grace, but thou art paſt grace. Laſt of all, as the king giueth thanks in his owne perſon, ſo in his owne perſon he confirmeth it, and ſayth, *Amen*, or *So be it*: he hath not a Clarke to ſay *Amen* for him, as they haue in Poperie, where the Prieſt muſt pray, and the Clearke muſt ſay *Amen* for all the reſt of the people. God ſayd to *Moſes*, the Leuites ſhall pronounce the curſes, and all the people ſhall ſay *Amen*. If at the curſes, much more at the bleſsings muſt all the people ſay *Amen*, for the one is againſt themſelues, and the other is for themſelues. In the primitiue Church, when the Miniſter had made any prayer in his Sermon, or before, or after, all the people (ſayth an auncient father) did ſay *Amen, Amen*, that the noiſe went vp as a mightie thunder in the Skies. Deut. 27. 15. 26.

Now

Now if we speake of a thing that is waighty indeed, and say God graunt it, not tenne amongest a thousand will say *Amen*, but we wil consider of the matter first, and so wee sit as blockes, not one whit mooued with the matter; and this is a great sinne. Againe, at publike prayer, the people ought to attend to the wordes of the minister when he prayeth, and al at once, as one body to say *Amen*. The clarke hath no more warrant to do it for them, then *Vzzah* had to holde vp the Arke from falling: for himselfe with the rest he ought to say *Amen*, but not alone for the rest, for not he, but the Minister is the mouth of God vnto the people, and the mouth of the people vnto god in prayer, but they must say, *So be it*.

Now to end, God doth now exhibite a bill vnto vs his people, requiring that whatsoeuer he shall demand at our hands, if we see it standeth with his glorie and our owne saluation, we will giue our consent and let it passe, or els the time will come that wee shall put vp our supplications to him, and they shall not passe. God graunt vs grace, to graunt our consent to al his will.

FINIS.

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